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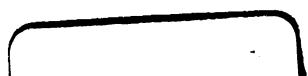
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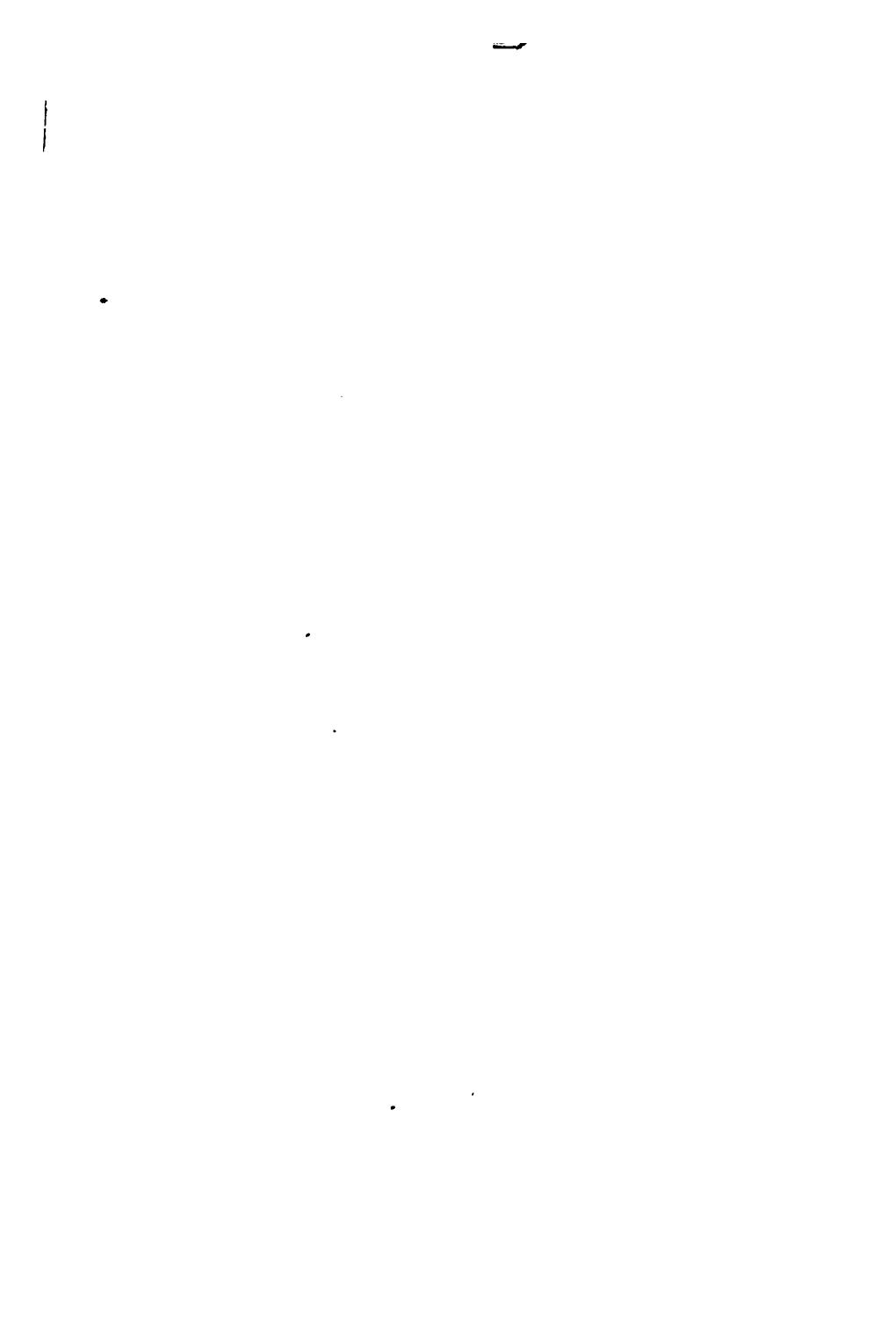


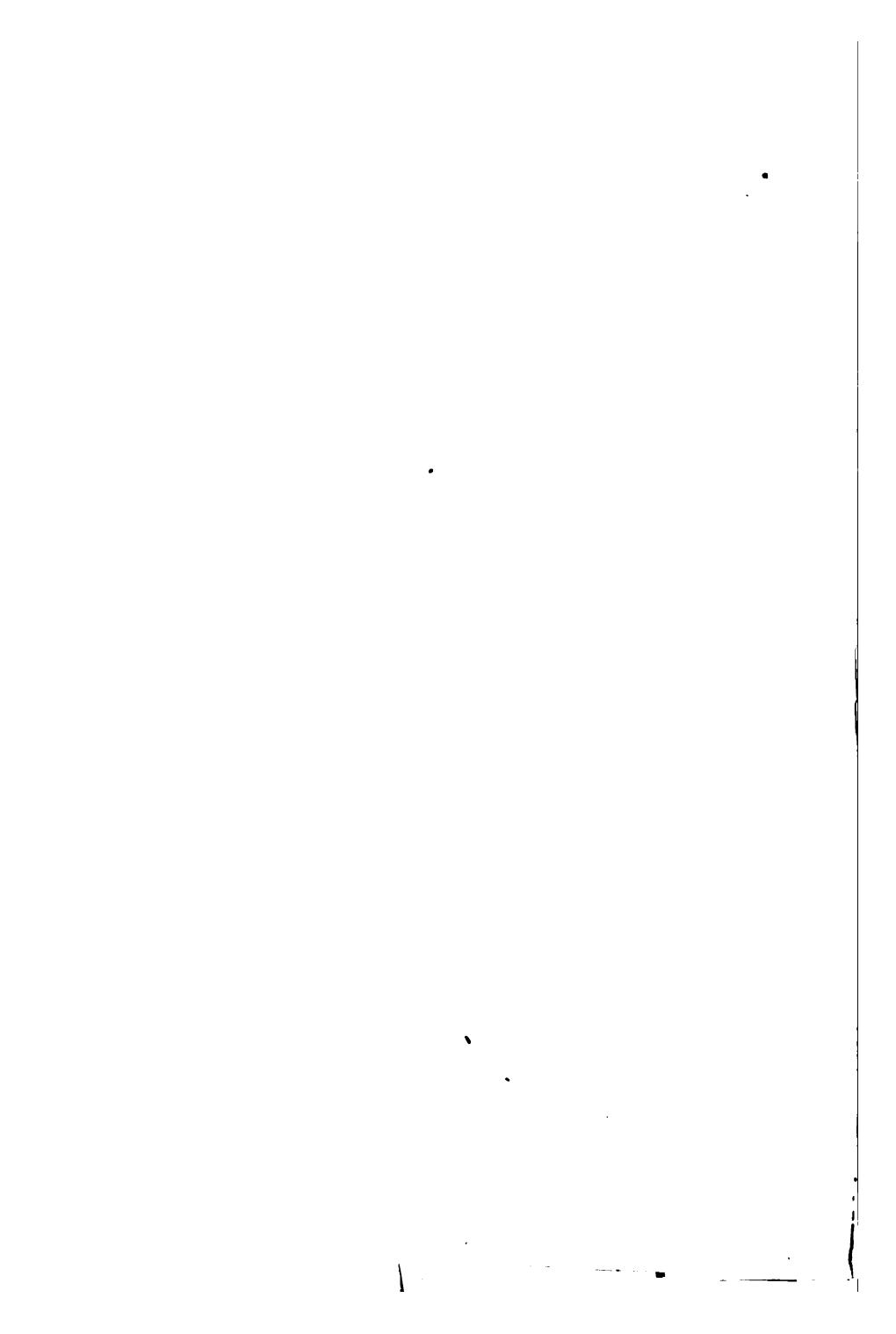




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JAQUELINE PASCAL.

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PAUL'S WORK.

JAQUELINE PASCAL;

OR,

CONVENT LIFE AT PORT ROYAL.

COMPILED FROM THE FRENCH OF

VICTOR COUSIN, FAUGÈRE, VINET,

AND OTHER SOURCES.

BY H. N.
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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

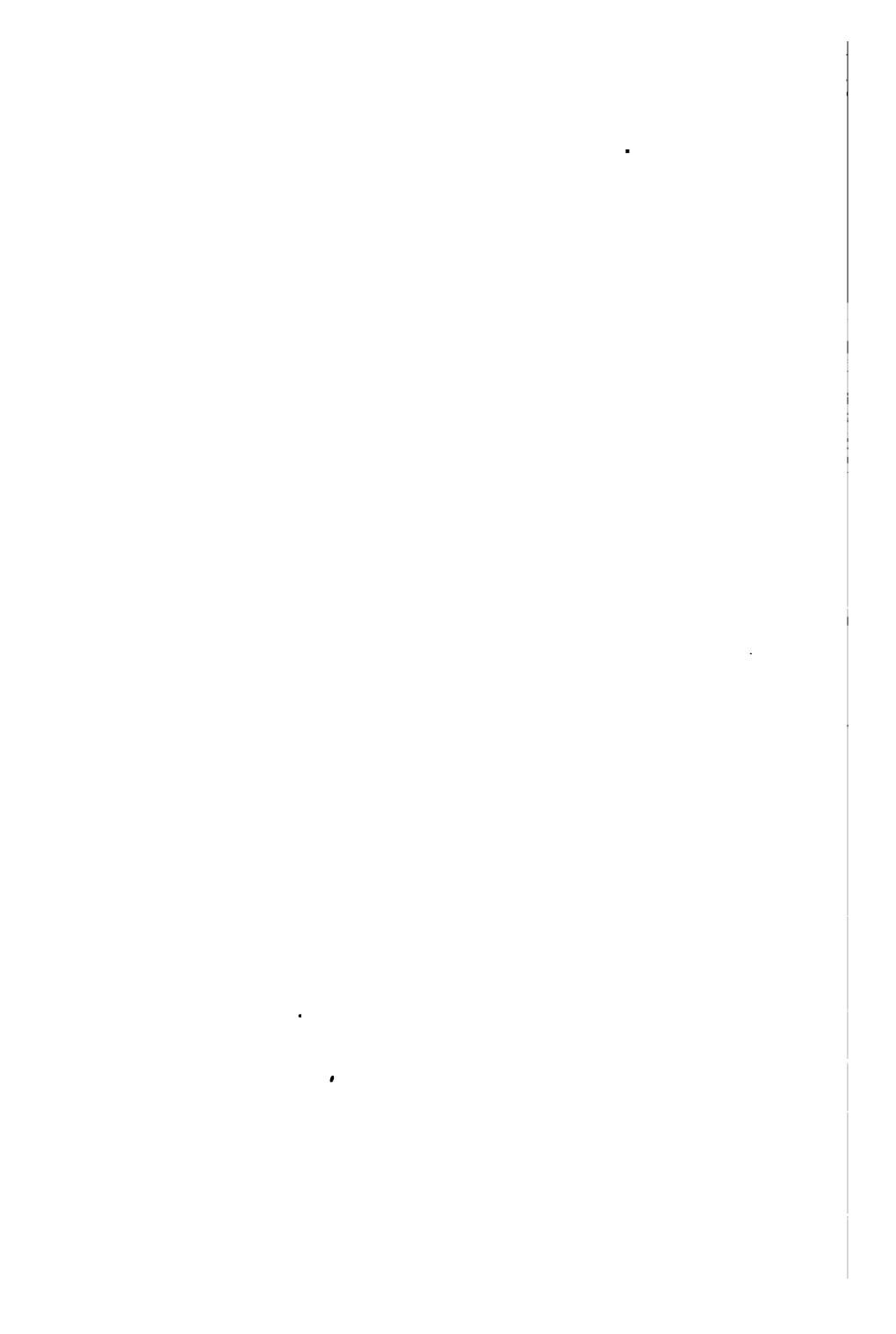
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JAQUELINE PASCAL.

INTRODUCTION.

PASCAL deserves to rank among the foremost names of the race. In that age of French literature which was emblazoned with the most profuse and gorgeous array of talent, none of his contemporaries surpassed, if any equalled him in reach and depth of thought, clearness and force of expression, and an eloquence graceful, winning, witty, sublime, or overwhelming, as the theme and the occasion might demand. In Science he enrolled himself amongst those of most inventive and profound genius. To Religion and its defence he brought the homage and consecration of powers which sceptics like Condorcet and Voltaire could not venture to scorn, nor aspire even to rival. And he was not a thinker, dwelling apart from the great controversies, and the critical, practical issues of his time. He was a power in his age. Upon the history of his Church he graved indelibly his mark in the *Provincial Letters*, working thereby an immediate and withal an enduring influence which has no counterpart in literary history. Jesuitism received from those Letters a wound from

which it never recovered, and which aided many years after to bring about its abolition. Ever since its restoration, the Jesuit order bears yet about it, amid its resuscitation, the scar not only, but the ulcer, the chronic and incurable infirmity, which it contracted in the collision of its adroit and unscrupulous casuists with the terrible and invincible Louis de Montalte, the name that Pascal chose to wear on his vizor and shield, as he rode into the lists to cope, single-handed, with the most potent and crafty, the most widely-spread and closely united, of the great religious orders of the time. And all this was accomplished amid broken health, and ere an early death had taken him away from other and unfinished tasks of yet larger compass and higher aims.

But to the Christian, the crowning grace of Pascal's character is the high, earnest, and absorbing zeal for God and his truth, that possessed and consecrated all his faculties and attainments, and gave the law to their action and influence. He laboured not for fame or power, but for Truth and its defenders. In that body of mighty and devout men, the Jansenists of France, were others not unworthy to share, by their force of intellect and power as writers, in Pascal's sympathies and his tasks; whilst to some of them, for their simple, earnest, and consuming piety, even he looked up with reverence and docility.

The history of the Jansenists forms one of the most interesting and remarkable episodes in the annals of the Christian Church. Although Port Royal, their great foundation, after a fierce and prolonged struggle, sank under the combined force of regal and sacerdotal enmity, Jesuitism could not at the same time extirpate the doctrines and system of Jansenism. These yet survived, and wrought widely and vividly. Their influence either within or without the bounds of the Romish Church is not yet spent; and of their relations to the cause of Christian morals and evangelical doctrine, of

sound learning and national freedom, and individual worth, the Protestant no less than the Romanist may well be the patient and delighted student.

Whilst the struggle was yet going on between a dominant Jesuitism, and the spiritual and more scriptural Jansenism that it hated and proscribed, a contemporary English scholar, Theophilus Gale, one of the most learned of all the Nonconformists, and the author of the erudite *Court of the Gentiles*, published for British Christians a brief history of Jansenism. Owen's works shew his interest in and acquaintance with the same controversy. The devout Archbishop Leighton, whose seraphic piety so delighted Doddridge, and in our own times so enchanted Coleridge, is thought to have derived some of his religious traits from his acquaintance, whilst in France, during his earlier years, with some of the excellent Jansenists of that country. In a later day, Count Zinzendorff, the reviver of Moravianism, and who gave to "The United Brethren" of Germany their present polity, was in like manner benefited and kindled by intimacy, during a visit in youth to France, with devout adherents of the same system. One of the essays of the eminent Jansenist moralist Nicole, upon which Voltaire has bestowed the warmest eulogies, seems to have equally won the admiration of the English philosopher Locke, who translated it into his own tongue,—it is said for the especial benefit of his patron and friend, the versatile, restless, and unscrupulous Earl of Shaftesbury. Left in manuscript long after Locke's death, it was a few years since for the first time published. More recently Hannah More was an admirer and student of Nicole, and incurred therefore the sportive reproof of Dr Johnson. Alexander Knox and his friend Bishop Jebb seem to have been conversant with the same treasures of Jansenist piety. An English Protestant, Mrs Schimmelpenninck, was the compiler of a work entitled *Memoirs of Port Royal*, which has passed through

several editions. Still more recently than Mrs Schimmelpenninck, a German Protestant, Reuchlin, has gathered from a wide study of the literature of Jansenism, and after personal research amid the manuscript collections of France, the materials for a history of Port Royal, which has appeared in his own tongue. St Beuve, one of the most distinguished of the living critics of France, has for years been occupied in a similar task. His history of Port Royal, the volumes of which have been issued at intervals, remains as yet incomplete.

To his labours his personal friend, the late lamented Vinet, more than once alludes, in the frequent references which that profound thinker and most accomplished writer has made to the history and character of Jansenism. Vinet, it need not be said, was a staunch and uncompromising Protestant. He was more—a most able and undaunted champion for evangelical doctrine and spiritual religion, to whom his sceptical and Romish contemporaries were compelled to do honour for his attainments and taste, and the rare graces of his style, as well as for the power and reach of his intellect.*

With such precedents, numerous and honoured, it will not, we must hope, be considered as compromising the Protestant character of the accomplished translator and compiler of the following volume, that she has prepared for the press this sketch of the Life, Character, and Writings of the younger sister of Pascal, illustrating as it does incidentally the principles and struggles of Port Royal and the Jansenists.

* The Count de Montalembert, in the pamphlet issued by him but the last year (1852), and entitled, *Des Intérêts Catholiques au XIX^e Siècle* (The Interests of Catholicism in the 19th century), which recounts with such glowing eloquence the recruited glories, real or imaginary, of Romanism in the last half century, says that Protestantism, with its thousand sects, "has not produced a theologian or a preacher since the death of VINET and the conversion of Newman" (p. 59).

Kinarea in genius, as she was most closely united by affection, to her distinguished brother, Jacqueline Pascal was a faithful witness, and, in the mental sufferings which hastened her end, a meek victim for the truth, as she regarded it. And, like her illustrious kinsman, she protested, though vainly, yet to the last, against some of those accommodations, extorted, as they supposed, by the necessities of the time, which some of the other great leaders of Jansenism—the firm and dauntless Anthony Arnauld amongst them—advised and urged. These advances for the sake of peace were unavailing endeavours, that, as Pascal had forewarned the counsellors of them, failed to save the Institution, but sacrificed the truth.

It seemed due to the integrity of history to preserve the allusions which, in Jacqueline's letters and other writings, recur not unfrequently to the usages and opinions of the Romish Church. It was a just complaint with respect to one of the English histories of Jansenism, to which we have referred, and was made by the London *Christian Observer* at the time when the history appeared, that by assiduous and systematic suppression, from the narratives and conversations which it recorded, of all the Catholic peculiarities which in the original French authorities they presented, the book taught a Protestant reader to suppose the Jansenists more free from grave errors, and more assimilated to Protestantism, than in truth they were.

For the authority of Scripture, the need of personal conversion, and the great doctrines of grace, as they were stated by Augustine, this body in the Catholic Church contended most strenuously and irrefragably. That the first impulse to their studies in this direction might have been supplied to Jansenius and his friend St Cyran by the Synod of Dort, and the controversies which it awakened throughout Protestant Europe, living as Jansenius did in Flanders, a

territory contiguous to the scene of that memorable synod, is not improbable. That the Huguenot creed of some of the ancestors of the Arnaulds may have contributed to render other and Catholic members of the family favourable to views of doctrine so nearly resembling Calvinism, was a favourite imputation of their Jesuit antagonists, but seems much less tenable. The great leaders of the Jansenist body sought most strenuously to purge themselves from any appearance of identity or sympathy with the Protestants of France and Holland, by works of controversy directed against eminent Huguenot writers, or written in defence of leading Catholic tenets. Upon transubstantiation, for instance, the work conjointly issued by Arnauld and Nicole, entitled *The Perpetuity of the Faith*, remains yet the most admired bulwark of this doctrine in the Catholic schools, who retain and extol this treatise of Jansenist scholarship, though Jansenism itself, as a system, and other writings of these very authors, have incurred the ban of the Vatican.

In the case of a thoughtful and dispassionate Protestant, the study of the lives and writings of the devout Jansenists must, it would seem to us, serve to deter and alienate from Rome, rather than to win to its communion. The system was an endeavour to graft the doctrines of grace, as Augustine had so mightily and effectively presented them in their symmetry and fulness, upon all the mediæval usages and abuses—the accumulated traditions and inventions of successive centuries in the Romish Church. Had Rome accepted these truths, and yielded gracefully to the engraftment, it would have “healed her wound”—the eating and widening cancer of error within her system—so far, at least, as to have made her teachings and her confessors far more specious and attractive in the sight of one who, studying the epistles of Paul, had there found a greater than Augustine, in the name and right of a wiser and greater than either

Augustine or Paul, setting forth the same glorious system as to the way of salvation by grace. Had Rome Jansenised, men loving the theology of Paul and Paul's Master might have begun to hope that such truths, indulged and honoured within the bounds of the Papal communion, must soon expel her remaining errors. But when the Infallible Church cast them out, and condemned their defenders, whilst meaning but to disown St Cyran or Quesnel, she forgot that she was condemning Augustine, the greatest of the old Fathers. God allowed her thus to put a fresh contradiction amongst her own doctors, and a new and deliberate impeachment of His own apostles and apostolic verities upon her own records. And the more able, the more excellent, and the more devoted the men and women adhering to Jansenism, thus disavowed and extruded, the more emphatically did Rome put herself in the wrong ; and her Protestant accusers were established, all the more assuredly, as being in the right, when they proclaimed the Communion that persecuted such confessors, and branded such a confession, as a Communion hopelessly blinded and irremediably corrupted—whose delusion was judicial and final, and for whose maladies there remained neither remedy nor hope.

It was, again, a justification from a new and opposite quarter, of the ground taken in the Protestant Reformation. Salvation by grace, the same great elementary truth that was the core and pith of Jansenism, had, in the hands of Luther and Zwingle, of Calvin, Knox, and Cranmer, revolutionised the Churches now known as the Reformed, and sent a new life into the governments, homes, workshops, and sanctuaries of their nations. But it had been the suspicion of some Protestants, more conservative than comprehensive in their views, that these truths might have been sustained, and yet the great mass of Romish rites have been retained, and Christendom kept up unbroken the bond of a common

ecclesiastical fellowship. The suspicion was based on forgetfulness of the fact that Rome had herself banished the Reformers, and that the rent was torn by her own proud hands, quite as much as by the divisive energy of the truth itself. But now, as if to put the truth of this conjecture as to precipitancy in the Reformers to a decisive test, rose up in Catholic France a body of learned, able, devout men, who resisted and denounced Protestantism, but asked to cherish, as Augustine had before them cherished, and as St Paul in Scripture taught them, the great fact of the faith, that man's salvation is merely and purely of God's free grace. They gave every evidence of sincerity, even to obstinacy, in their attachment to Romish usages, the Papal Communion, and Peter's Chair. They honoured relics, and kept saints' days, and used pictures, and adored the sacrament, and were punctual in confession. In these and the like things they yearned to be Pharisees of the Pharisees, the most Romanising of Romanists. But they would, with these, hold the old and great principles as to the mode of man's salvation, that the best men of the Church, in its best ages, had enounced and defended. In refusing such a desire, offered by such men, Rome silenced the Protestant cavillers at the old Reformers. Knox had been charged with barbarism, and truly or untruly been represented as saying that the rookeries of cathedrals must fall, or the rooks of the clergy would return. The Papacy now virtually uttered a cruder and fiercer edict. It swept out doves, and hewed down dovecotes, that the owl might sleep in peace, nor the raven be shamed by comparison with the birds of a softer cry and a brighter wing.

As to the miracles claimed to have been wrought in defence of Jansenist innocence and sanctity, whether in the earlier times of the body, while Pascal yet lived, or in the much later age of the *Convulsionnaires*, as one portion of the

later Jansenists were called, the subject would require a volume, if its discussion were to be commenced at all. No one who knows the character, either of Pascal or of his sister, can be persuaded that for any earthly consideration they would have lent themselves to a conscious fraud in holy things. That their niece was, after the application of the Holy Thorn, healed of a tedious and noisome ulcer, entirely, suddenly, and permanently, seems established by evidence that it would be impossible to overturn. But the force of hope and excited feeling is to some modern physiologists a sufficient explanation. They believe that the physical influence of mind over body is greater than has been generally supposed, and see in this the solution of the mystery. Of the cases of healing, in far later years, said to have occurred in the churchyard of St Medard in Paris, at the grave of the Jansenist M. Paris, they were, in proportion to the multitude of applicants, few and dubious, ill-authenticated or transitory. Hume, indeed, affected to see in these, rivals and counterparts of the miracles of the gospel, so different in number, variety, constancy of effect, and sufficiency of authentication. Had they been as numerous, startling, and unquestionable, as for the purposes of the sceptic's argument they ought to have been—but as in reality they were not—there are many Protestants who would see in them no seal of Heaven, but rather a new betrayal of the traits and predicted marks of the Antichrist whom Paul denounced, and whom Christ's coming is to destroy. Though some thinkers—the honoured Dr Wardlaw, in his late work on Miracles, is one with them—deny the power of working miracles to any but the One Supreme God, it has been the judgment of theologians of the highest name in former times, that—in Scripture we find, as from reason we might anticipate, that—under the government of that Supreme Jehovah, he has allowed, under certain limits, the exhibition of superhuman power by

beings superior to man, though inferior to himself. Satan, too, may work his wonders, though, for the purpose they would subserve, they are but lying wonders. The security of man against fatal delusion, lies in the fact that God exercises the higher power, and works the more numerous, august, and controlling miracles ; and in the principle, that man, in the case of a doctrine claiming superhuman endorsements, must test the doctrine by the Scriptures, as well as the alleged miracle and seal by his senses. Buttressed about, as Scripture is, by evidence of miracle and prophecy (which is cumulative and germinant miracle), the great doctrines of Scripture might now legitimately overweigh any amount of supposed miracle that such hostile but superhuman agency should be permitted to work, in derogation and confutation of those statements of Revelation. Many of the Protestant opponents of Rome believe that they see in Scripture distinct warning that her claims were to be, at times, aided by such feigned and delusive prodigies. And seeing, from the histories of Job, and Peter, and Paul, how close the contiguity which the deceiver Satan may secure to the task, and path even of God's elect, such Protestants can believe that good men—the favoured and beloved of Heaven, but unhappily entangled in an unscriptural system and communion—may, as the consequence and retribution of that entanglement, have been the witnesses and dupes of such specimens of his subtle and potent jugglery. Without undertaking to dogmatise on a subject intricate and disputed, it would seem that, on such principles, we might fully admit the honesty not only, but the eminent piety, of those witnessing to strange appearances, which yet, in connexion with the unscriptural doctrines and usages they were to support, win neither our submission nor our reverence.

The young and accomplished author, whose first appearance the present volume brings with it, seems to us, in most

of her translations, to have succeeded in preserving an idiomatic, flowing, and racy style, which might often lead the reader to suppose that the document he peruses had been first written in our tongue. In introducing to Christians who speak the English language and hold the Protestant system, the character and writings, the Christian graces and the bitter trials, of a gifted and devout Romanist, the compiler trusts that the great truths in which Jacqueline Pascal, like her fellow-confessors, was united with us, will be regarded as receiving fresh illustration from their effect upon one in whom dignity and lowliness, wisdom and simplicity, lofty genius and saintly piety, the martyr's firmness and the woman's tenderness, were so rarely and beautifully blended.

* * * * *

WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS.

18th June 1853.

CHAPTER I.

The Pascal Family.

THE family of the Pascals was truly a remarkable one. When Richelieu,* with his eagle glance, perceived in his audience chamber Etienne Pascal, accompanied by his son Blaise, then about fifteen, and his two girls Gilberte and Jacqueline, he was astonished at the children's beauty, and instead of waiting for the father to introduce them to his notice, himself bade the elder Pascal take special care of his offspring, saying, "I mean to make something great of them."

Etienne Pascal was himself an excellent man. He belonged to an old family of the province of Auvergne, in the south of France, studied law in Paris, and returning thence to his native city of Clermont, purchased the office of assessor-general. He was afterwards made president of the court of excise. In 1618 he married Antoinette Begon, who died in 1628, leaving him with three children, Gilberte, Blaise, and Jacqueline. In 1630 he sold his office of president, together with the greater part of his possessions in Auvergne, investing the proceeds in rents of the Hotel-de-Ville in Paris, whither he removed in order to educate his children, more particularly Blaise. He was a well-informed and even a

* The cardinal-duke, who, in the reign of Louis XIII. of France, exercised despotic authority as Prime Minister.

learned man, who associated with mathematicians and scientific persons, and shared in their toils. There is extant a letter of his to the Jesuit Noel, wherein he advises him, in a tone half-jest, half-earnest, not to commit himself in disputing with Blaise Pascal about the weight of the atmosphere, and warns him that he will find the latter a formidable adversary. He bestowed on his son a somewhat systematic education, which was not without its influence on the bent of his mind. The two daughters also received very thorough instruction. The elder, Gilberte, devoted to the other children all a mother's care. Margaret Perier, her daughter, says of her, "When my grandfather came to Paris for his children's education, she was ten years old. She married at twenty-one, while her father was living in Rouen," Monsieur Perier, a distant cousin, who belonged to Clermont, but was sent with a commission to Normandy in 1640, which he executed so well as to excite the esteem of Monsieur Pascal, and the latter gave him his daughter's hand. They resided partly in Auvergne, partly in Paris or Rouen. "When at Clermont, Mad. Perier went into society suitable for persons of her age and rank, and was much admired, being beautiful, graceful, and very witty. My grandfather had educated her, and from her earliest youth amused himself with teaching her mathematics, philosophy, and history." This picture need not be suspected of embellishment. The austere Margaret never flattered, and such a Jansenist as she would not have noticed her mother's beauty unless it had been something extraordinary. The Jansenist manuscripts contain many of Mad. Perier's letters, but posterity is more indebted to her for the well-known *Life of Pascal*, an admirable biography, which makes us love Pascal. His sister, in the discharge of her affectionate task, says as little as possible of herself, and thinks only of delineating her brother. Nevertheless, as Reuchlin remarks, the *Life of*

Pascal by Mad. Perier plainly yet unintentionally reveals the latter's sound sense, and loving care for one who was her pride, and whom she deeply revered. Many sufferings awaited him through life, but she, like a true Martha, stood at his side to help him, while Jacqueline, though younger than he, may be considered as Pascal's spiritual twin-sister. Gilberte early regarded her brother as a superior being, both in mind and character; and though she was herself no idle spectator of his great achievements, Jacqueline exercised a stronger influence over him. The latter in after years manifested the spirit of a Mary. Hand-in-hand with him she traversed the journey of life, and his death soon followed hers. The twin-souls were not long divided.

Jacqueline is a much more remarkable character than even Gilberte. Heaven had gifted her with genius as well as with feminine attractions. Neither in intellect nor disposition was she inferior to her brother Pascal, and it is impossible to measure what her attainments might have been, had she cared for fame, and cultivated her native powers. But perfection, of whatever kind, imperiously requires of all who would attain it, that they should eagerly and perseveringly search for it. To win fame, we must value it, for genius needs resolute tillage before it will yield abundant fruit. So is it with virtue; the happiest dispositions, the most noble instincts of our nature, are insufficient, unless to these be added a determination to do right, submission to law, and ceaseless vigilance in order to prevent errors, to fortify and develop good impulses, and to convert them into good habits. The women of Port Royal set before themselves great objects—salvation and spiritual perfection; and sought to attain their ideal by continued effort, diligent meditation, earnest prayer, and austere self-denial. Half as much care bestowed on their minds, would have placed them in the first rank of writers. Where are the men who

have dared more, struggled more, suffered more or better, than these very women? They knew and braved persecution, calumny, exile, imprisonment. When they wrote, they did it with a mingled simplicity and grandeur. We cannot but recognise in them minds and hearts of a rare and totally different stamp from those of the most brilliant dames in the cotemporary court circles. With a little cultivation, they were capable of producing masterpieces. For what, in fact, is style? The expression of thought and character. Whoever thinks meagrely and feels but feebly, is incapable of a good style. On the contrary, any one of lofty intelligence, devoted to sublime contemplations, and that has a soul in unison with his intellect, cannot help occasionally writing lines worthy of admiration. And if reflection and study be superadded, such an one has within him the materials of a great writer. The Mère Agnès and the Mère Angélique wrote much, yet neither they nor their brother Antoine Arnauld left behind them models of composition. How was this? They lacked the difficult art of making expression equal the thoughts and feelings it was intended to convey. That art they would have disdained, or rather rejected as sinful. Far from displaying their genius, they endeavoured to stifle it in humility, in silence, and in complete abnegation of the world and self. They only wrote as they spoke —from pure necessity. Here and there certain beautiful phrases escape from them unconsciously, by the sole force of noble thought. But art being absent, their unpolished and careless style soon sinks, and, unless dictated by strong feeling, becomes diffuse, dull, or dry. And Jacqueline Pascal, their disciple, their equal in intelligence and feeling, imitated them in the attempt to extinguish her own enthusiasm and genius, or rather to turn both into another channel. She attained the moral excellence she sought; she failed in attaining the literary excellence she despised. We acknow-

ledge that her writings are not highly polished, but they indicate great natural talent. Many of her pieces in prose and verse are to be found scattered through the Jansenist collections; and to these we have united a number of pieces hitherto unpublished, more especially letters addressed to her sister Gilberte and her brother Pascal. No means of improving our knowledge of that noble family ought to be neglected, and Jacqueline, moreover, deserves attention for her own sake.

Gilberte Pascal, not satisfied with writing her brother's life, sought also to preserve some memorials of her darling sister. Accordingly, she composed sketches of Jacqueline from early childhood until the latter's entrance into the convent of Port Royal, which display the same simplicity, good sense, and graceful style, as does the *Life of Pascal*. Several paragraphs devoted to her aunt, in the Memoirs of Margaret Perier, Gilberte's daughter, continue and complete her mother's work; and by the aid of these sparse fragments, the biography of Jacqueline Pascal must be composed. However, the writings she has left, and her confidential letters, shew her intellect and disposition, and teach us not only to admire but to love her.

Her life and writings may be divided into three parts:—
1. From her childhood till her conversion. 2. From her conversion till she became a nun. 3. From thence until her death.

"My sister," says Madame Perier, in her Sketch of the Life of Sister Jacqueline de Sainte Euphémie, by birth, Jacqueline Pascal, "was born at Clermont* on the 4th of

* Clermont, a city of Auvergne, one of the southern provinces of France, now comprising the Departments of Puy de Dome and Cantal. Auvergne is a mountainous country, peopled by the aborigines of the Pyrenees. Blaise Pascal was proud of his birthplace, and Jacqueline does it in one of her poems:—

"A Clermont, forte e la unica, bell' e charme,
T'ough ormai e la sae morte, s'è la mia nascita
E sarà sempre, unica, la mia."

October, in the year 1625. I was six years older than she, and can remember, that as soon as she began to speak, she gave signs of great intelligence, besides being perfectly beautiful, and of a kindly and sweet temper, the most winning in the world. She was, therefore, as much loved and caressed as a child could possibly be. My father removed to Paris in 1631, and took us all with him. My sister was then six years old, still very pretty, and so agreeable, that she was a general favourite, in request with all our friends, and spent but little of her time at home.

“At seven years old, she began to learn to read, and by my father’s wish, I became her teacher. This was a troublesome task, on account of her great aversion to it ; and, do what I would, I could not coax her to come and say her lesson. One day, however, I chanced to be reading poetry aloud, and the rhythm pleased her so much that she said to me, ‘If you want me to read, teach me out of a verse-book, and then I will say my lesson as often as you like.’ This surprised me, because I did not think that a child of her age could distinguish verse from prose ; and I did as she wished. After that time she was always talking about verses, and learned a great many by heart, for she had an excellent memory. She wanted to know the rules of poetry, and at eight years old, before knowing how to read, she began to compose some that were really not bad—a proof how strong in this respect was her native bent.

“She had then two playmates who contributed not a little to her enjoyment. They were the daughters of Madame

It yields a picture of its Maker’s power.
There, in Auvergne,—from those proud peaks afar,
Whose gloomy heights nor fruit nor harvests know,
But in their stead dark precipices yawn ;—
Rises a little hill, so fresh and fair,
So favour’d by the Sun’s celestial ray,
That *Clairmont* seems its most appropriate name.”

Saintot, and themselves made verses, though not much older than Jacqueline ; so that, in the year 1636, when my father took me with him on a journey to Auvergne, and Madame de Saintot begged that she might keep my sister with her while we were gone, the three little girls took it into their heads to act a play, and composed plot and verses, without the least aid from any one else. It was, however, a coherent piece, and had five acts, divided by scenes regularly arranged. They performed it themselves twice, with some other actors whom they invited, before a large company. Everybody wondered that such children should be capable of constructing a complete work, and many pretty things were discovered in it, so that it became the talk of all Paris for a long time."

Thus began the reputation for talent which Jacqueline never afterwards lost. The play, could we recover it, would be a curiosity, but it has entirely disappeared.

" My sister still continued to make verses about whatever came into her head, as well as on all extraordinary occurrences. At the beginning of 1638, when the Queen was expecting an heir, she did not fail to write on so fine a subject, and these verses were better than any of her previous efforts. We lived at that time very near Monsieur and Madame de Morangis, who took so much delight in the child's pretty ways, that she was with her nearly every day. Madame de Morangis, charmed with the idea of Jacqueline's having written verses on the Queen's situation, said that she would take her to St Germain (one of the royal palaces) and present her. She kept her word ; and on their arrival, the Queen being at the moment engaged, every one surrounded the little girl, in order to question her and see her verses." Jacqueline was then only twelve years old, and so small of her age, that some suspicion was naturally awakened whether she had really composed them, and her ability was at once

tested. "Mademoiselle,* then very young, said to her, 'Since you make verses so well, make some for me.' Jacqueline went quietly into a corner and composed an epigram for the princess, which plainly shewed that it was written on the spur of the moment, by referring to the command that Mademoiselle had just given. It ran as follows :—

"It is our noble princess' will,
That thou, my Muse, exert thy skill
To celebrate her charms to-day:
Hopeless our task!—the only way
To praise her well is to avow
The simple truth—we know not how!"

Mademoiselle, seeing that she had finished it so quickly, said, 'Now make one for Madame de Hautefort.'† She immediately wrote another epigram for that lady, which, though very pretty, was easily seen to be impromptu :—

"O marvel not, bright masterpiece of earth,
At the prompt tribute by your charms call'd forth.
Your glance, that roves the world around,
In every clime hath captives found.
That ray, which charms my youthful heart,
May well arouse my fancy's art."

Soon after this, permission was given to enter the Queen's apartment, and Madame de Morangis led my sister in. The Queen was surprised at her poetry, but fancied at first that it was either not her own, or that she had been greatly aided. All present thought the same, but Mademoiselle removed their doubts by shewing them the two epigrams that Jaque-

* Mademoiselle de Montpensier, daughter of the Duke of Orleans, and niece to Louis XIII., better known in history as the Great Mademoiselle. She was afterwards one of the most conspicuous heroines of the Fronde, and during that struggle ordered the cannon of the Bastile to be turned against the royal troops. Late in life she married the Duke de Lauzun, who was greatly her inferior in rank, and repaid her condescension with neglect and unkindness.

† Madame de Hautefort, one of the ladies in waiting on the Queen, Anne of Austria.

line had just made in her presence, and by her own orders. This circumstance increased the general admiration, and from that day forward my sister was often at court, and much caressed by the King, the Queen, Mademoiselle, and all who saw her. She even had the honour of waiting on her Majesty when she dined in private, Mademoiselle taking the place of chief butler.

“ She wrote many other pretty things, such as graceful notes to her friends ; and her repartees were remarkable for point : one could not wish finer. But all this did not in the least lessen her gay good-humour. She amused herself most heartily with her playmates in all childish games, and when alone, played with her dolls.”

In 1638 a small collection of her poems was printed, and dedicated to the Queen, Anne of Austria, who had taken so much interest in the little poetess. Several of the pieces are addressed to her. Another collection was made by Margaret Perier, the niece of Jacqueline, many years afterwards. Those poems most likely to interest modern readers have been translated, and will be given according to their dates. The remainder, though reprinted by M. Cousin, and not destitute of poetic grace, yet scarcely deserve transfer into a foreign tongue. They consist of odes in honour of the Virgin Mary and St Cecilia, together with a number of short epigrams and love-songs which it is difficult to believe could have been written by one so young. Even in that age of gallantry, they drew from Benserade, a poet of some note, and the rival of Voiture, a long address, one verse of which says—

“ When girls of thirteen sigh and weep for love,
 ‘Tis often wrong ;
But genius lifts thee common rules above,
 Fair child of song ! ”

Jacqueline herself considered her poetic talent as an instinct implanted by her Creator, for which she claimed no merit,

but ascribed all the glory to him. A little poem on this subject, written in August 1638, is not without a degree of elevation, both in thought and style.

STANZAS

THANKING GOD FOR THE POWER OF WRITING POETRY.

Lord of the Universe,
If the strong chains of verse
Round my delighted soul their links entwine,
Here let me humbly own
The gift is thine alone,
And comes, great God, from no desert of mine.

Yea, Lord, how many long
For the sweet power of song,
Which thou hast placed in my young feeble heart!
Thy bounties string my lyre,
And, with celestial fire,
To my dull soul a hidden light impart.

O Lord, a thankless mind
Will not acquittal find
In thy pure presence. Therefore it is just
That, touch'd with godlike flame,
I should thy love proclaim,
And chant the glories of thy name august.

As waterfalls, and rills,
And streams wind past the hills
In steady progress toward their parent sea,
Thus, Lord, my simple lays,
Heedless of this world's praise,
Find their way home, O Source Divine, to thee!

August 1638.

In the following year, the tranquillity of home, that important requisite in Etienne Pascal's plan of education, was suddenly disturbed by an event, the consequences of which greatly influenced the bent of his children's minds, and their ultimate destiny. France was then at war with Spain, and the contest not taking so favourable a turn as had been pre-

dicted at its commencement, the government found itself in urgent need of funds. The all-important supplies were obtained by dint of attentions and flattery to the corporation of Paris, which induced them to acquiesce in measures for the arbitrary seizure of private property. The elder Pascal had, as we have seen, made large investments in bonds of the Hotel-de-Ville, and Cardinal Richelieu plundered him, as well as others, of a portion of their income. This injustice came near provoking an insurrection. Some of the greatest stockholders, among whom was Pascal, went, in March 1638, to the Chancellor, and remonstrated so strongly, even threateningly, against the wrong done to themselves, and to four or five hundred more, that the Chancellor became alarmed, and Richelieu gave orders to have the malcontents arrested. Pascal, learning betimes that some of his companions were in the Bastile, thought it advisable to travel incognito into Auvergne; and thus, when the halberdiers came to search his dwelling, he could not be found.

Mad. Perier's account of the transaction is this:—"In March 1638, my father, together with many other persons who, like himself, were interested in the rents charged upon the Hotel-de-Ville, was at the Chancellor's house, where words were spoken, and some acts occurred, slightly violent, not to say seditious, which being reported to the Cardinal de Richelieu, he ordered the chief actors to the Bastile. My father was supposed to be one of their number, and search was accordingly made at his residence for him, but he effected his escape, while three of the others were taken. Meantime he remained in concealment at the houses of different friends, without daring to come home at all. He was very much comforted under this affliction by Jaqueline's endearing ways, for he loved her with unusual tenderness. But this consolation did not last long, for in September of that same year she became most dangerously ill of

the small-pox. My father then forgot his fears, and said that, let the risk be what it might, he must be at home, in order to watch with his own eyes the course of her illness. And he really never left her for a moment, not even sleeping out of her room. She recovered, but her countenance was quite disfigured, and being then thirteen, she was old enough to value beauty and to regret its loss. And yet this mischance did not in the least trouble her ; on the contrary, she considered it as a mercy, and in some verses composed as a thank-offering, she said that her pitted face seemed to her the guardian of her innocence, and these traces of disease certain signs that God would keep her from evil. All this was done of her own accord."

A translation of this little poem is here given. Dr Reuchlin remarks that there is something about it painfully precocious for one of her years, yet her precocity does not seem to have made her unhappy ; as her sister goes on to say, "She did not leave the house during the whole winter, not being fit to appear in company ; but her time did not hang heavily, for she was very busy with her trinkets and dolls."

STANZAS

THANKING GOD FOR RECOVERY FROM THE SMALL-POX.

RULER of earth and skies !
Bid thou my hymn arise
As from an angel's tongue ;
I sound no mortal's praise,
To thee my voice I raise,
And at thine altars chant my grateful song.

Thou, from thy throne above,
Hast look'd, in sovereign love,
On a poor earth-worm's trail ;
Thy hand my fever broke,
And shielded from death's stroke
A rack'd and restless frame, than glass more frail.

All men, great God, may see
 Thy pure benignity
 To one so weak and worn ;
 Without thy loving aid
 Thus wondrously display'd,
 My life had failed in its April morn.

When, in the mirror, I
 Scars of mine illness spy,
 Those hollow marks attest
 The heart-rejoicing truth,
 That I am thine, in sooth,
 For thou dost chasten whom thou lovest best.

I take them for a brand
 That, Master, thy kind hand
 Would on my forehead leave,
 Mine innocence to show :—
 And shall I murmur ? No.
 While thy rod comforts me, I will not grieve.

But, Lord, my work is vain,
 No human heart or strain
 To praise thee hath the skill
 To tell thy bounties here
 That charm the eye and ear,
 Possess my power, but cannot pass my will.

November 1639

Cardinal Richelieu had an unfortunate idea that his taste in poetry and the fine arts was fully equal to his vast political genius ; and in February 1639, he took a fancy to have some children act a play, selecting for that purpose not one of Corneille's masterpieces, but a tragedy by Mademoiselle Boudoir, entitled *Tyrannie Lorrain*, which suited his own false taste. His niece, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, undertook to find the little girls who should perform it, and asked Madame de Saintot if she would allow her younger daughter to act, sending at the same time an invitation for Jacqueline Pascal to take a part. Gilberte, who in Etienne Pascal's absence was mistress of the house, proudly answered : "The Cardinal has not been kind enough to us to make us take

any pains to give him pleasure ;" alluding to her father's constrained exile. The Duchess was an excellent woman, who often sought to remedy instances of individual suffering occasioned by her uncle's political measures, and knew well how to effect this by humouring his weak points. She therefore requested Gilberte to withdraw her refusal, adding that she thought there was a possibility of obtaining her father's recall, if his little girl were to petition the Cardinal, and promising to use her own influence in his behalf both with her uncle and the Chancellor. Gilberte then asked leave to consult her friends, to whom advice coming from so high a quarter seemed of such moment that they thought the opportunity must by no means be let pass. A celebrated actor of those days, called Mondory, who came from Clermont, and had assumed the name of Mondory, because it had belonged to his godfather, an Auvergnese of rank, was accordingly engaged to teach the child her allotted part, and took great pains with her. "She performed," says Madame Perier, whose modesty did not allow her to chronicle her own spirited reply, not unworthy of a *Cornelia*, "so charmingly that she delighted everybody, especially as she was very small, and had a childish face, more like that of a girl of eight than of thirteen. After the play, she stepped down from the stage, that Madame de Saintot might lead her to Madame d'Aiguillon, who wished to present her to the Cardinal ; but, seeing that something delayed Madame de Saintot, and that the Cardinal was rising to withdraw, she went up to him all alone. When he saw her coming, he sat down again, took her on his knee, and, caressing her, perceived that she was weeping. He asked what was the matter, and she then repeated to him the following address :—

' Deem it not strange, thou prince without a peer,
If I have fail'd to hold thine eye and ear ;

JAQUELINE PASCAL.

My trembling frame seems palsied with dismay,
As trouble steals my very voice away.
If thou wouldest have me win thy gracious smile,
Call back a banish'd father from exile.
Of clemency oft proved this boon I crave,
From perils vast the innocent to save.
Thus wilt thou set soul, voice, and gesture free
To task their utmost skill in pleasing thee.'

Vicarino d'Aiguillon added many obliging entreaties, and the Cardinal at length told Jacqueline that he would grant her request, and her father might return whenever he chose. And then this mere child, without any prompting, said to him: 'My lord, I have still another favour to ask of your eminence.' The Cardinal was so enchanted both with her graceful behaviour and the slight freedom that she had taken, that he said to her, 'Ask what you like, and I will grant it.' She answered: 'I entreat your eminence to allow my father the honour of paying his respects to you on his return, so that he may himself thank you for the kindness you have done us all to-day.' The Cardinal said: 'Not only granted, but it is just what I wish. Tell him, that he need have no apprehension in coming, and let him bring his whole family with him.' Margaret Perier, in relating the above scene, says that her mother, then about nineteen, and Blaise Pascal, then fifteen, were standing near, both in the full bloom of youthful beauty, and that the Cardinal expressed pleasure at the idea of restoring a father to so lovely a family. He then committed Jacqueline to Madame d'Aiguillon's care, and requested her to see that all the young actresses were supplied with refreshments, which was done magnificently.

On his arrival in Paris, M. Pascal lost no time in paying his respects to the Cardinal at Ruel. The latter, when his name was announced, asked if the gentleman were alone, and on being told that he was, sent him word that he could not have an audience until he came accompanied by his family.

Next day he took with him all three of his children, and the Cardinal received him very graciously, saying that he felt great gratification in restoring a man of so much merit to a family deserving his tenderest care, and bade him watch over his children, promising to make something great of them in the future.

Mademoiselle Scuderi testified her gratitude for Jacqueline's aid in the performance of her tragedy, by addressing to her some complimentary lines, which M. Cousin characterises as commonplace, and yet full of bombast. The little girl, whom she had styled Cassandra, politely replied :—

“ Were I Cassandra, famed of yore
For beauty that could burn
The Sun’s bright heart to ashes, I would spurn
Her prophet-dowry, and implore
From the Parnassian god a better spell,—
The wished-for knowledge, how to praise you well.”

CHAPTER II.

The Young Poetess at Rouen.

CARNYAL RICOUARD soon proved the sincerity of his expression of good-will, by selecting Etienne Pascal as one of the commissioners appointed to discharge the duties of Intendant for the province of Normandy, in the district of Rouen, where, in an insurrection of the peasantry occasioned by the introduction of a new system of taxation, the rebels had defied the local authorities, destroyed the Receipt-office, and murdered some of the collectors. The government, convinced that the Parliament of Rouen had not done its duty, sent thither two independent commissioners, armed with full power to enforce the laws. To one of these, M. de Brie, was committed the oversight of the military; to his colleague, M. Pascal, that of the finances. A body of troops supported them, under command of the fierce soldier Chastell, a Châtelain, in company with whom Pascal commanded his journey, and who had to force his way through the streets of Rouen, and to put down the obstinate resistance of the peasants nicknamed the Barefooted, with fire and sword. Pascal performed the troublesome task of setting a large part of the records and accounts to rights, with exemplary resolution and prudence, forbidding his subordinates to accept the smallest gratuity, and even discharging his own secretary, though a relation because he had received a louis-

d'or. The interest which his son Blaise took in the regulation of this business, led him to invent his extraordinary calculating machine, which was patented in 1649.

As soon as it was practicable, Etienne Pascal summoned his family to their new home. Corneille, the creator of the French classic drama, was then living in Rouen, his birthplace ; he frequently visited the new-comers, and aided in the cultivation of Jacqueline's taste and the development of her poetic talent. By his advice she became a competitor for the prize which an old custom of Rouen awarded to the writer of the best poem on the Church holiday of the Conception of the Virgin ; but when the festival was celebrated, and the president of the ceremony announced that the prize was hers, she was absent. Corneille, however, rose and improvised a brief address of thanks in her name. The prize was brought to her with drums, trumpets, and a grand procession ; " Yet," says Mad. Perier, " she received it with wonderful composure. Though she was then fifteen, she was as frolicsome as a little child, and still found much amusement in her dolls. We used to scold her for this, but had great difficulty in getting her to give up childish plays, which she much preferred to the distinguished society of the town, although she received general admiration. She took no pleasure in fame or applause, and I never saw any one care less for them.

" The reputation she had acquired from early childhood, instead of lessening as she grew older, increased, because she possessed those noble qualities that suit every age, so that she was invited everywhere, and those who did not know her intimately, were anxious for her acquaintance. When she went into company without being expected, every one was rejoiced at her entrance ; but it was most remarkable that she was never in the least puffed up, and received such attention with an indifference that only made her the more

beloved : her daily companions not being at all jealous, but doing, on the contrary, all they could to increase the esteem felt for her, by making known her private excellences, her gentleness, her kindness, and her lively yet equable temper."

In 1641, Gilberte Pascal married Florin Perier, a distant cousin of her father's. They lived two years in Rouen, and then went back to Clermont. Jacqueline's life, for the next few years, seems to have been pleasant and uneventful. "During this time," continues her sister, "there were many opportunities for her marriage, but Divine Providence always interposed some obstacle. On these occasions she never shewed either like or dislike, being perfectly submissive to my father's will, though as yet uninfluenced by religion, towards which, indeed, she felt alienation, and even a little contempt, believing that many of its practices could not satisfy a person of reflection." Poor Jacqueline ! was it strange that a mind like hers should be perplexed in view of the many puerilities that overload the truths of the Gospel, in the corrupted system of Christianity under which it was her misfortune to be born ? It appears that some of her associates must have been of the Reformed faith, since, in 1645, we find her addressing a poem of mingled regret and affection to one friend on the decease of another. The piece is entitled—

CONSOLATION FOR THE DEATH OF A HUGUENOT LADY.

PHILLIS, calm your dreadful grief,
Let the anguish find relief
That bewails your buried friend,
Or your days must swiftly end,—
And to lose you were such pain,
That I could not life sustain.

Vain are all your bitter cries ;—
Death, alas ! is deaf to sighs,
And to tears is also blind.
Were his nature less unkind,

He had reverenced the charms
Wither'd in his wintry arms.

Nought escapes him here below,
For his stern impartial blow
Heeds not happiness or woe.
Homely features, beauty's brow,
Guilt and innocence, must bow,
And the might of Death allow.

Change is mark'd on all we see;
Our most firm felicity,
As we grasp it, fades away.
Even you, some dreary day,
Will be mourn'd by those who now
Seek your love with tearful vow.

I pretend not, by discourse
To arrest the rapid course
Of the thoughts that vex you so.
All their bitterness I know,
And your grief I cannot blame
While my soul partakes the same.

Friendly tears were never shed
O'er a lovelier lady dead:
Cloris was, in form and face,
Gifted with angelic grace;
But, in youth's enchanting bloom,
Fate has laid her in the tomb.

You have deeper cause to groan!
O'er her state a shade is thrown,
Anxious doubts your spirit chafe,
As you ask, "Can she be safe?"—
She who died, remaining still
A heretic in act and will?"

Doubt not, in the dying hour,
That her strengthen'd soul had power,
By afflictions purified,
Every weight to cast aside:
Light celestial entering in,
That she meekly own'd her sin.

And, O Lord, if earthly love
Can thy tender pity move,
Hear the prayers we'll henceforth make
In thy temple, for her sake
Whom thou didst create so fair,
But who never worshipp'd there.

Her ill-fated birth alone
Caused the errors we bemoan ;
Blinded by her zeal's excess,
And her filial tenderness,
To the last she persevered
In the faith her sire revered.

Thou didst on her spirit shower
Heavenly gifts, the precious dower
Of the souls that love thee best :—
Calm devotion fill'd her breast,
And the flame of sacred love
Raised her hopes to thee above.

Day by day her dearest care
Was to serve the Lord by prayer.
Could her faith so fruitful be
If it were not given of thee?
Shall the zeal thou didst bestow
Sink her in eternal woe?

In my dim and sinful state,
Lord, I dare not penetrate
Secrets that thy wisdom hides ;
But thy goodness yet abides,
And thine equitable will
Is with mercy temper'd still.

Therefore, Phillis, weep no more ;—
Since the God whom we implore
Chides your grief, and bids you hope
In his love's unbounded scope ;
Following thus th' example set
By the friend whom you regret.

One or two minor poems, written during her residence in Rome, may be inserted here.

DEVOTIONAL SONNET.

O GLORIOUS Architect of earth and sea,
Yet of frail man the Maker and the stay,
Here at thine altar's foot I humbly pray,
Let thy world-sheltering love encircle me,
Well may my every hope be built on thee,
For I can hear unmoved the thunder's growl,
Can brave o'er demons, and their whispers foul,
When my heart trusteth in thy sure decree.

But ah ! the power of sin o'erwhelms my frame,
Frustrates my wishes, makes my spirit tame,
And dims the lustre of its zealous flame.
Its languor pardon, Lord ! My strength uphold,
Make my weak nature in thy service bold,
Let not thy love in my faint heart wax cold.

February 1640.

SERENADE.

O pure and lovely Clarice, rise,
Bid sleep depart from those sweet eyes !
We blame thee not, that through the day
Thy charms should drive our peace away ;
Then is it just for thee to sleep
While they who love thee, vigil keep ?

O mark the sorrows of my soul,
List to my sighs, and then console ;
Or if thy heart I cannot gain,
Lend me thine ear while I complain,
And since thy frowns forbid my sleep,
Share thou the weary watch I keep.

In 1646, the elder Pascal, while absent from home on a charitable errand, slipped upon some ice, fell, and dislocated his thigh. This occurrence occasioned an increase of intimacy between his family and two noblemen living in the environs of Rouen, who were often called upon to remedy similar accidents. They were brothers, belonging to the numerous family of Bailleul, one having the title De la Bouteillerie, and the other that of Deslandes. From childhood they had shewn peculiar skill in the setting of broken or dislocated bones, and had made anatomy and medicine their favourite studies, at first by way of amusement, until they became attracted by the preaching of a worthy servant of God, named Guillebert, the pastor of Rouville, who had shared the captivity of St Cyran. The eloquence of this man was so great, that people came from all parts to hear him preach, and members of the parliament of Rouen were accustomed to hire lodgings at the village of Rouville, and spend their

Saturday nights there, in order to be ready for his Sabbath discourses. The two noblemen placed themselves under this clergyman's spiritual guidance, and each soon had a small hospital erected in his own park. Deslandes, who had ten children, furnished his building with ten beds; his brother, who was childless provided twenty, and both spent much time in attendance on the sick.

They replaced Etienne Pascal's dislocated limb, and were kind enough to remain three months with him for the sake of effecting a perfect cure. "The whole family," says Madame Perier, "was benefited by their residence in it." Hitherto the Pascals had been regarded as not only upright, but pious people. Gilberte assures us that the fear of God had always kept her brother Elaise from yielding to youthful temptations: "and what, for a mind like his, was still more extraordinary," continues she, "he had never been inclined to become a freethinker in matters of religion, but had confined his researches within the limits of natural philosophy. He often told me, that he felt deeply grateful to my father for having led him from earliest childhood to reverence religion, and impressed on his mind the fundamental truth, that matters of divine revelation are not to be tried, much less condemned, at the tribunal of human reason. This maxim, often repeated by a father whom he deeply revered, and whose teachings on other subjects were always sustained by clear and powerful arguments, became so firmly rooted in his soul, that, even in early youth, he looked upon infidels as men whose assertion of the universal sovereignty of human reason places them on a false foundation, and betrays their entire ignorance of the nature of faith. His noble, expansive spirit, while it eagerly thirsted for knowledge and made diligent search into the mysteries of science, was yet, in the concerns of religion, humble as a little child. This principle of unquestioning faith governed his whole

life, and when in after years his thoughts were completely engrossed with spiritual realities, to the exclusion of every other topic, he never busied himself with curious or enticing questions of theology, but bent his soul's full strength to the attainment of Christian holiness, dedicating to this object every talent he possessed, and meditating day and night upon the law of his God."

Up to this time, however (1646), the piety of the family, though sincere and active, was not enlightened (*éclairée*). "This expression," says Reuchlin, "so characteristic of Port Royal, while, on the one hand, it comprehends a careful observance of Church rules, frequent confession and communion, and the practice of good works,—on the other, includes the truth, that God's service and the world's can never be united, and that man can only obtain eternal salvation as the free gift of God's grace." The experience of renewed hearts, however differing in minor details, however alloyed with more or less of error, is everywhere substantially the same. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us," had been the watchword of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and of Luther in his fierce battle with Rome; and now these obscure members of that apostate communion, having grasped the same blessed truth, were treading in the footsteps of their Lord, and causing others to take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. "The edifying discourse and exemplary lives of their visitors," says Madame Perier, "made my father, brother, and sister wish to read the books which had aided them in attaining to so great a degree of holiness, and this was their first acquaintance with the works of Jansenius, M. de St Cyran, Arnauld, and others that were of great service to them." Blaise was the first to set the example of holiness and self-denial, to taste the happiness of solitary communion with the Lord of angels and of men, and to rest his whole hope

of salvation on the righteousness of his Redeemer. He at once endeavoured to make his sister Jacqueline a partaker of this new-found joy, and she, although, as we have seen, her genius and amiability made her the darling of society, could not long withstand his loving entreaties and example. Thenceforth she called herself his spiritual daughter. Her father, in like manner, became the child of his children, learning from them to give himself, heart and life, to God. M. and Madame Perier visited Rouen that same year, and became the subjects of a similar change. The whole family placed themselves under the tuition of Pastor Guillebert, who made no half work with his converts. Margaret Perier, in her *Memoirs*, gives us a specimen of his dealings and their effect: "My father and mother sat under the ministry of M. Guillebert, Doctor of the Sorbonne, a very holy and discreet man. He counselled my mother, who was then twenty-six years old, to lay aside all her ornaments, and wear no trimmings on her dresses, which she cheerfully did. After she had stayed at Rouen for two years, wearing the most unpretending attire, she was obliged to return to Clermont. M. Guillebert then told her that he had an important piece of advice to give her, and it was this: That ladies whose piety prevented them from wearing ornaments, often took pleasure in decorating their children, and that she must be careful to avoid doing so, gay dress being far more injurious to children, who are naturally fond of it, than to grown persons, who, knowing its frivolity, care but little for it. Accordingly, on her return to Clermont, in the fall of 1648, where she had left my sister, then a little over four years old, and myself, then not quite three, she found that my grandmother, who had charge of us in her absence, had dressed us both in frocks embroidered with silver, and fully trimmed with ribbons and lace as was then the fashion. My mother took everything off and clothed us in grey muslin, without lace or

ribbon. She forbade our nurse to let us play with two little girls of our own age in the neighbourhood, whom, before our mother came, we had seen every day, lest we should acquire a love for the gay garments they usually wore. She was so particular on this point, that in 1651, when my grandfather Pascal died, and she was obliged to be present in Paris at the settlement of his estate, she chose to incur the expense of taking us with her, for fear that my grandmother would make us dress in finer clothes, if we were left under her care. She always taught us to wear the most simple and modest clothing, and I can say with truth, that since I was between two and three years old, I have never worn either gold, silver, coloured ribbons, curls, or laces."

"About the close of that year (1646), M. de Bellay, the Bishop of that See, was holding an ordination at Rouen, and my sister," says Mad. Perier, "who had not yet been confirmed, wished to receive that sacrament. For this she prepared according to the hints she had found in the writings of M. de St Cyran, and we may believe that she then really received the influences of the Holy Ghost, since her character from thenceforward was completely changed."

To this period of her life, Dr Reuchlin is of opinion that the following letter, addressed to her sister, belongs, although its date, as found in the Jansenist collection of manuscripts, is two years earlier.* It seems to express the state of mind with which Jaqueline for the first time partook of the communion, and breathes, throughout, the unmixed rapture of a new-born soul:—

* These manuscripts are not so remarkable for accuracy in dates as they are for rough outlines of characters and events. The letter itself refers to the works of Singlin, and Jaqueline was unacquainted with the Jansenist authors before her father met with his accident.

"March 24, 1644 (1645).

"**M**Y DEAR SISTER,—I only received yours of January 22d last evening, but it brought me no small comfort. I am heartily glad of the happy meeting you speak of; it really seems a special favour vouchsafed to me, and all the greater because so entirely undeserved. If you were my confessor, I might explain this more fully, but as it is, you must not fail to plead earnestly in your devotions, that our Lord and his Mother may obtain for me, by the merits of his death, that grace I so greatly need. And you will not forget all our family, nor yet the nation, so that I shall not speak of them here. Only I beg that one of your subjects of prayer next Thursday may be the public manifestation, or at least a private manifestation to certain persons, of an important fact now concealed, though its effects are wonderful. You must say, as did Jesus, 'Father, if it be possible,' which means, 'if it be for thy glory,' adding, at the same time, 'Thy will be done,' and implore that God would deign to send his own light into their hearts rather than their intellects. This has for some time past been the burden of many of my prayers; I mean of those prayers which are only, as M. de St Cyran says, the heart's desire. I repeat my request for you to join me in supplicating for this thing, about which my anxiety is excessive, though chiefly lest anything should be said or done contrary to God's command. If you were here, what a relief it would be to open my whole heart to you! God has denied me this consolation. Blessed be his holy name! I will try not to wish for that which he does not see fit to grant. One advantage, certainly, belongs to Christians. If they are prohibited from joining in this world's pleasures, they are also forbidden to grieve over its misfortunes, and even told to rejoice in them. Now, as the latter are of far more frequent occurrence than the former, the believer's joy must necessarily be more uninterrupted.

Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ says, 'Your joy no man taketh from you ;' and we are bound to feel with the Apostle who, on another topic, exclaims, 'How can he be afflicted whose very sorrows turn into joy ?'

"When I perceive that this looks like an attempt at giving you instruction, which God forbid that I, having neither right nor qualification, should presume to do, I remember that M. Singlin remarks, 'That our prayers to God are not meant to remind him of our wants, which, as our Lord says, "are all known to him before we ask," but are offered in order that we may ourselves remember them.' I say the same to you, once for all, so do not forget it. Pray to God for me, with your whole heart, and give him thanks for his mercies to us all, but offer up special prayers and praises on my brother's account. I am writing just what comes into my head. Once more, pray for me ; I need it. Ask of God that he would, so to speak, pass a sponge over the time I have wasted, the opportunities I have neglected, and the favourable moments I have let slip, for they are innumerable. Entreat him to accept the obedience I render him by receiving blessings of which I am unworthy."

CHAPTER III.

Port Royal.

THE intense industry with which Blaise Pascal applied himself to study was a great injury to his health. He himself said that from the age of eighteen he had never known what it was to be free from pain for a single day, although his sufferings were not always equally severe. His sister, Mad. Perier, has given us some idea of what he had to bear : " Besides other inconveniences, he was unable to swallow any liquid unless it was made lukewarm, and allowed to trickle, drop by drop, down his throat. In order to relieve his intolerable headaches, the great inward fever, and other ailments to which he was subject, his physicians ordered him to take certain medicines every alternate day for three months. These had to be swallowed in the same tedious, lukewarm way—a process which seldom failed to nauseate all who witnessed it, though the patient never once complained. For a long period his lower limbs were paralysed, and he could not move without crutches ; his feet were cold as marble, and to procure any warmth in them he had to wear stockings dipped in brandy.

The Fifteen Prayers in which Pascal pleads for grace to make a right use of sickness, were probably composed at this time. A few sentences have been translated as specimens of the rest.

“ O Lord, who art in all things so good and compassionate, that not only the prosperity but the humiliations of thine elect ones, are the effects of thy mercy, keep me by thy grace from behaving like a heathen in the low estate to which thou hast most justly reduced me; and may I, as a true Christian, always acknowledge thee to be my Father and my God. For the changes in my condition affect not thee. Whatever vicissitudes befall me, thou art the same, and none the less God when thou dost afflict and punish, than in my seasons of ease and indulgence. And since the strong corruption of my nature has rendered thy former blessings (of health) injurious, grant, Lord, that thy all-powerful grace may now make thy chastenings the means of restoring my spiritual health. Either through bodily weakness, or the strength of divine love in my soul, may I become incapable of enjoying the world, and find in thee my chief delight. Cause me, O Lord, to adore in silence the way in which thy gracious providence has meted out my days; let thy rod comfort me; and having, in my prosperity, tasted the bitterness of sin, may I, in this season of salutary affliction, experience the heavenly sweetness of thy grace. Open thou my heart, and take possession of that rebellious place which sin has occupied; bind thou the mighty enemy who rules there, and then appropriate his treasures; seize my affections now stolen by the world; rob thou the robber, or rather reclaim what is thine own by right of creation and redemption. O my God, how happy is the heart that loves an object so attractive as thyself, so blessed in its influence on the worshipper, so incapable of shaming trust! Far, Lord, from pretending that there is any merit in my prayers, or any necessity compelling thee to grant them, I desire to bless thee for the right emotions thou dost inspire, and even for the wish to ascribe their origin to thee. Teach me, I pray thee, that bodily pains are at once the emblem and

consequence of spiritual disease. O that they might also be its remedy, by leading me to consider the far more dangerous though invisible ulcers of my soul, and to look unto thee for help and healing! Enable me to feel that deep repentance without which physical suffering is but a new occasion of sin ; graciously mingle thy consolations with my pains, and help me to bear them in a Christian spirit. I ask not exemption from trial, which is the recompence of glorified saints, but oh, let not my natural anguish be unsoothed by the comforts of the Holy Ghost, for this is the curse of Jews and pagans; and while I suffer, may I experience that sorrow for sin, and that satisfaction in thy supporting grace, which are among the privileges of the true Christian.—Grant, O Lord, that with a continual and calm serenity I may submit to every event, in the conviction that I know not what to pray for as I ought, and that, by presumptuously demanding any special favour, I must become responsible for results which thou hast in thy wisdom hidden. Lord, I know myself to be certain of but this one thing : it is good to follow thee,—it is evil to offend thee. Beyond this, I am ignorant of what is best or worst for me, whether sickness or health, poverty, wealth, or any earthly allotment. Such discernment passes the power of man or angel, and belongs to those secrets of thy providence which I adore, but seek not to fathom. Make me, therefore, always content with thy will ;—being now sick, may I glorify thee in my sufferings, knowing that without them I cannot attain unto glory, and that thou, O my Saviour, didst choose to be made perfect thereby. The marks of thine agony once revealed thee to thy waiting disciples, and thou dost still set on thy followers the seal of tribulation. Number me among them ; and since nothing can be acceptable to the Father unless offered by thee, blend, Master, my will with thine, and my pains with those thou didst

endure. Unite me to thyself, and fill me with thy Holy Spirit. Enter into my heart and soul, there to share my sorrows, and to complete in me the measure of thy sufferings which yet remains to be endured by thy members, until the perfect consummation of thy body the Church, so that, being one with thee, I shall no longer live or suffer of myself, but thou, O my Saviour, wilt live and suffer in me; and having thus endured but a small part of thine anguish, thou wilt one day fill me with the glory it has won for thee, wherein thou livest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen."

As soon as Pascal's health was a little improved, he determined to make a visit to Paris, and consult the physicians there. Jaqueline accompanied him. During their stay, his reputed attainments in science gained him attentions from many distinguished men, among whom was the celebrated Descartes, well known as one of the greatest mathematicians and thinkers of his age.* He was also an amateur physician, and hopes were entertained that his skill might be useful in the treatment of Pascal's complicated ails.

Jaqueline sent Mad. Perier an account of the interview. A brief sketch of Pascal's experiments on the weight of the atmosphere may not be out of place here.

The mechanical properties of the atmosphere had engaged the attention of Galileo, who recognised its weight, but

* Descartes was a wonderful example of patient self-denial and love of truth. He devoted thirty years of his life to philosophic investigations, and lived in the midst of Paris like a hermit, till, imagining that the air of the capital was unfavourable to thought, he withdrew to Holland, and there spent many years in the discovery and promulgation of what he believed to be truth. Being driven thence on a charge of atheism, he returned to Paris, where new persecutions awaited him, and he died, at the age of fifty-four, in exile, under the patronage of Queen Christina of Sweden. The celebrated axiom, *Je pense, donc je suis*, "I think, therefore I am," became the foundation of his vast system of philosophy, which was constructed by dint of persevering labour, and long regarded with reverence, although inconsistent with after-discoveries, and in some respects with Revelation.

failed to discover that that weight, joined with its fluidity and elasticity, opposed a definite force to any agent by which the removal of the atmosphere from any space was attempted. This resistance had long been observed, and was expressed, but not explained, by the term, "Nature's abhorrence of a vacuum." Galileo, however, being aware of the fact that suction-pumps would not raise water more than about thirty feet high, expressed it by saying, that thirty-five feet was the limit of "nature's abhorrence of a vacuum," since above that height a vacuum still remained. Torricello, Galileo's pupil, gave this problem his careful attention. "He argued that if the weight of the atmosphere were the direct agent by which the column of water is sustained in a pump, the same agent must needs exert the same amount of force in sustaining a column of any other liquid, and therefore, that if a heavier liquid were used, the column sustained would be less in height exactly in the same proportion as the weight of the liquid forming the column was greater. Mercury, the heaviest known liquid, appeared the fittest for this purpose. The experiment was eminently successful. The weight, bulk for bulk, of mercury was fourteen times greater than that of water, and accordingly it was found that, instead of a column of thirty-five feet being supported, the column was only thirty inches, the latter being exactly the fourteenth part of thirty-five feet."*

Torricello's death prevented his pushing the inquiry further, but the particulars of it were communicated to Pascal, who at once applied himself to the discovery of some experimental test of a nature so unanswerable as to set the question at rest for ever. "He argued,† that if the weight of the incumbent atmosphere were the real agent which sustained the mercury in Torricello's tube, as it was inferred to be by

* See Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopedie, article Pascal.

† Ibid. page 198.

that philosopher, anything which would diminish that weight ought to diminish in the same proportion the height of the mercurial column. To test this, he first conceived the idea of producing over the surface of the mercury in the cistern wherein the end of the tube was immersed, a partial vacuum, so as to diminish the pressure of the air upon it. But apprehending that this experiment would hardly be sufficiently glaring to overcome the prejudices of the scientific world, he proposed to carry the tube containing the mercurial column upwards in the atmosphere, so as gradually to leave more and more of the incumbent weight below it, and to ascertain whether the diminution of the column would be equal to the weight of the air which it had surmounted. No sufficient height being attainable in Paris, the experiment was conducted, under Pascal's direction, by his brother-in-law, M. Perier, at Clermont, on the Puy de Dôme, a hill of considerable height near that place. The experiment was completely successful. The mercurial column gradually fell until the tube arrived at the summit, and as gradually rose again in descending. Bigotry and prejudice could not withstand the force of this, and the maxim of 'nature's abhorrence of a vacuum' was thenceforth expunged from the code of natural science. Pascal's invention and patience, and his admirable plan of verifying all his opinions by facts and actual experiments, entitle him to the highest praise. Yet the honour of his discovery was disputed, both by the Jesuits, who accused him of plagiarism from the Italians, and by Descartes, who declared that he had himself suggested the experiment, possibly in the very interview which Jacqueline narrates. But Pascal took no notice of either, and published the account of his experiments without alluding to their attacks. He certainly deserves the credit of having pursued the hints of Torricello with hesitation and care, not attempting to build up a theory of his own, and deciding only when decision was self-evident."

" PARIS, September 25, 1647.

" **MY VERY DEAR SISTER**,—I have deferred writing to you, because I wished to send a full account of my brother's interview with M. Descartes ; and had not leisure yesterday to tell you that M. Habert called here on Sunday evening, accompanied by M. de Montigny, of Bretagne, and as my brother was at church, the latter informed me that his fellow-townsman and intimate friend, M. Descartes, had expressed a great wish to see my brother, on account of the high esteem in which he heard that my father and Blaise were both held ; and had requested him to come and see if it would be inconvenient to my brother (whom he knew to be an invalid) to receive a visit from M. Descartes next morning at nine o'clock. When M. de Montigny made this proposal, I was puzzled what to say, knowing the difficulty which Blaise finds in exerting himself or talking, especially in the forenoon, and yet not thinking it right to decline the call. Finally, it was agreed that M. Descartes should delay coming until half-past ten, and accordingly he came at that hour, in company with M. Habert, M. de Montigny, a young ecclesiastic whom I do not know, M. de Montigny's son, and two or three other little boys. M. de Roberval, to whom my brother had sent word, was also there. After the usual civilities, the calculating machine* was mentioned, and being displayed by M. de Roberval, was very much admired. They then began to discuss the theory of the Vacuum, and M. Descartes, on being told of an experiment, and asked what he thought it was which expelled water from a syringe,

* The calculating machine, invented by Blaise Pascal, at the age of nineteen, was hailed by mathematicians as a most ingenious and wonderful invention, but it was very complex, costly, and easily deranged. It was completed only by intense application, not merely to the mental combinations requisite, but to the mechanical part of the execution, for the stupidity of the workmen he employed was a constant source of vexation, and the tax upon his brain so increased his illness as to oblige him for a time to leave the machine unfinished.

that it was subtle matter ; he could, and M. de Roberval, began to argue with M. Descartes. But as they liked, because he had (M. de Roberval), for he said by his watch that it was time to dine in the Faubourg St. Germain. So did M. de Roberval, who rode in a carriage, where, being quite fatigued, and were rather wild ; that is, according to Roberval's account, who returned after dinn to Alibrat here. I had almost forgotten to tell you, that he was sorry that he could only stay so long, and that my brother to come back the next day. M. d'Alibrat, hearing of this the next day, had to be present, and tried to bring M. Descartes. M. Descartes sent an invitation through M. de Roberval, who was too lazy to come, although M. d'Alibrat had engaged to dine in our neighbourhood. M. Descartes made this second call partly on account of my illness, concerning which, however, he said but little, only recommending him to remain in bed every day as long as he could do so without weariness, and to take cold baths. They conversed on many other subjects, for a long time until eleven, but I cannot tell you what they were, as M. de Roberval was not present, and could not inquire, having been busy the rest of the day in superintending his first bath. I thought that it made his head ache, but the water's being so warm perhaps caused this. I think that having his feet bled on Sunday night did him good, for he was able to speak on Monday quite forcibly,—in the morning to M. Descartes, and in the afternoon to M. de Roberval, with whom he held a

long argument on many points of equal importance in theology and physics, without any further inconvenience than a heavy night sweat, and but little sleep, for he escaped the severe headache which I apprehended after such an effort.

“ Tell M. Ausoult that my brother wrote the other day to Father Mersenne, as he wished, in order to inquire what arguments M. Descartes had brought forward against the column of air. The answer was very badly written, for the poor man has had the artery of his right arm cut, while being let blood, and will perhaps be maimed for life. I found out, however, that it was not M. Descartes who opposed the theory (for, on the contrary, he believes it firmly, though on grounds which my brother disapproves), but M. de Roberval. The letter also mentioned M. Descartes’ wish to see my brother, and his instrument as well, but of course we understand this as mere politeness. Tell M. Dumeainil, if you see him, that a person who is a mathematician no longer, and others who never have been, send their compliments to him, who has just become one. M. Ausoult will explain to you what this message means: I have neither time nor patience. Farewell, my dear sister.

“ J. PASCAL.”

Superscribed—“ To Mademoiselle* Perier, at M. Pascal’s house, King’s Counsellor, behind the walls of St Ouen, Rouen.”

The preaching of M. Singlin in Paris was greatly frequented and discussed at this period. That ecclesiastic was one of the pupils of M. de St Cyran, the leader of the Jansenist

* The title of Madame was at this period confined to the nobility. All untitled ladies were addressed as Mademoiselle, even after marriage. The Pascal family had been ennobled by Louis XI., as a reward for services rendered him, but hitherto had not availed themselves of the privilege.

party in France, and had succeeded him as confessor and chaplain to the convent of Port Royal. During their stay in Paris, Blaise and Jacqueline Pascal went frequently to hear him. "Finding," says Madame Perier, "that his ideas of a Christian's life were in accordance with those she had formed since God first touched her heart, and considering that he was the spiritual director of the House of Port Royal, my sister came to the conclusion that in that nunnery one might, to use her own expression, be wisely pious. She imparted her thoughts to my brother, who, far from dissuading, encouraged her, for he was imbued with similar views. His approbation so strengthened her, that thenceforth she never wavered in the design of devoting herself to God."

"My brother, who loved her with especial tenderness, was delighted with her project, and thought of nothing but how he should aid her to accomplish it. As neither he nor she had any acquaintance at Port Royal, he bethought himself of M. Guillebert, a mutual friend, and took Jacqueline to see him. This gentleman was so well satisfied with the interview, that he himself introduced her to the Abbess Angélique, who received her very kindly. From that time my sister went to Port Royal as often as the great distance of her dwelling would permit, and the Abbesses told her to place herself under the charge of M. Singlin, in order that he might judge if she were truly called to a cloistered life. She did not fail to obey; and from the very first time that M. Singlin saw her, he told my brother that he had never known so strongly-marked a vocation. This testimony was a great comfort to my brother; and it made him doubly anxious for the success of a design which he had every reason to believe was of God. All this occurred in the early part of the year 1648, when my brother and sister were at Paris, and my father at Rouen."

Some account of the history and regulations of Port Royal

must here be given, in order to render Jacqueline's succeeding history intelligible.

Port Royal des Champs was a nunnery founded in crusading times, by Matilda, wife of Matthew de Marli, in the hope of ensuring her husband's safe return from the Holy Land. It stood in a pleasant valley on the road from Versailles to Chevreuse, about six leagues from Paris, and belonged to the Reformed Cistercian branch of the Benedictine Order. The rule of that order, it is well known, was instituted by Benedict in the sixth century. While yet young, he had been distinguished by his endurance of the most fearful temptations in the desert of Subiaco, forty miles distant from Rome ; and chancing to hear that a knot of Pagans still conducted their idolatrous worship on the summit of Monte Casino, in the immediate neighbourhood of Rome, his spirit was stirred within him ; he at once hastened thither, and by dint of alternate preaching and persuading, succeeded in overthrowing the altar and converting its votaries. He then took up his abode on the scene of conquest, and there, the fame of his piety soon attracting other devout men to the spot, the first Benedictine monastery was built, and the rule of St Benedict promulgated. To the usual obligations of poverty, chastity, and obedience, it added two others, viz., manual labour for seven hours of each day, and perpetual vows. These, however, were to be preceded by a year's noviciate, during which the entire code was daily read over to the novice, ending with the exhortation, " This is the rule under which thou art to live and strive for salvation : if thou canst follow it, enter ;—if not, go, thou art free ! " But the vows, once taken, were irrevocable, and any infraction of them was severely punished. The sister of St Benedict, St Scholastica, who soon after retired with a few pious women to a solitude not far from Monte Casino, was usually revered as the first Benedictine nun.

In the course of succeeding centuries, the Order of St Benedict ramified into various branches. Among the most important was that of the Reformed Cistercians, so named from the Abbey of Citeaux, one of their earliest foundations. They revived the Benedictine rule in its primitive rigour, and insisted much on the necessity and advantages of silence, were especially devoted to the worship of the Virgin, and wore white garments, white being her consecrated colour. Their favourite saints were St Augustine, St Joseph, and St Bernard. St Augustine, it will be recollectcd, was the child of many prayers, the champion of orthodoxy, and under his banners the Port Royalist defenders of the faith were afterwards ranged. St Bernard was a learned and devout theologian, the opponent of Abelard—the eloquent preacher of the second crusade.

For a long period the convent of Port Royal grew in wealth and reputation, but towards the close of the sixteenth century, the general relaxation of manners which pervaded the court of Henry IV. found its way into the cloister. Benedictine rules and Cistercian commentaries were alike forgotten, the vow of seclusion was tacitly disregarded, and the religious habit formed the chief, almost the only, distinction between its youthful wearers and the gay frequenters of the Louvre. Nor was this to be wondered at, since their ignorance of religion was deplorable, and that of their confessors scarcely less; sermons were almost unknown; the communion was only administered on festival days, and a masquerade sometimes took its place. The old chronicles of Port Royal sum up the sad record of derelictions by stating that the nuns wore gloves, masks, and starched linen, just like other ladies, and allowed their hair to peep out in most becoming fashion.

Very different was the state of things when Jaqueline Pascal first went to Port Royal. The sisterhood, once noted

return of devotion,
such, both by prayer
and masses of other convents,
it is a condition even more
hopeless than their own.
work of a woman—the cele-
brated Angélique belonged to the family of
her grandfather, M. Marion, a dis-
tress of Henry IV., obtained
the abbey of Port Royal for Angélique,
and that of St Cyr for her sister
the Queen, and a papal bull, confirming
these nuns seated the tiny Abbesses in their new
abode. The King, on learning the truth, merely
said, "How his Holiness had been tricked. Some
time when, hunting in the neighbourhood, he
was in progress on the abbatial grounds, the little Angélique,
then about eleven, went forth to meet him. Crosier
and followed by a long train of nuns, "she rebuked
the King with all the majesty of an infant Ambrose,"
the King obeyed her mandate. This early triumph was
the source of others more lasting.

The childhood of Angélique passed happily enough. She
was much petted by the nuns, and enjoyed the advantage of
a mother's watchful care. Madame Arnauld, although the
mother of twenty children, felt it her duty to make frequent
visits to the convent, and to look after its interests and
welfare. This oversight must have been no small addition
to her many anxieties. The young Abbess grew up tolerably
steadily, but did not scruple to engage in worldly amusements
and excursions whenever she could, and much preferred a
novel to her Breviary. The childish ignorance which had
led her to assume unhesitatingly the irrevocable vows was

now bitterly regretted, and she would have given worlds to cancel them. But in her seventeenth year she was startled from this state of feeling by the sermon of a Capuchin monk, who, in passing by Port Royal, obtained permission to preach before the nuns. This man, Father Basil* by name, had left his own convent for the purpose of "apostatising in a foreign land," to use the words of Jansenist historians, who, however, own that "the miserable being spoke so forcibly on the blessedness of a holy life, and on the infinite love and humiliation of the Lord Jesus in his incarnation, as to produce a deep effect on the young Abbess." Thenceforward her resolution was taken to devote her whole life to God's service, and she was only withheld from resigning the office to which conscience told her she had no right, by the hope of inducing a better mode of conduct and feeling in those who were under her charge. Accordingly, she was careful not to alarm them by any sudden measures, trusting rather to the silent influence of example and earnest prayer; and these after a time succeeded. Her next step was to rebuild the Abbey walls, and to exclude all visitors. To this her father and brothers, whom she made no exception to the rule, were vehemently opposed, and their reproaches gave Angélique such intense pain, that she swooned in the contest, which, however, ended triumphantly for her, and took away all hope of admittance from less hallowed guests. Within five years from the time of her conversion, all the austerities of St Benedict's rule were re-established at Port Royal, while those who observed them were taught to consider every instance of self-denial or devotion as worthless, unless it arose from love to God.

Angélique was extremely attached to her sister Agnes, and could not rest until she had inspired the latter with her

* The fact was that the Capuchin had become convinced of the errors of Romanism, and declared himself a Protestant soon afterwards.

own spirit of reform. Agnes, who was naturally sedate, soon yielded, and renouncing the Abbacy of St Cyr, became a simple nun of Port Royal, where she was speedily distinguished by her progress in piety, and was appointed mistress of the novices during her own novitiate. She was the authoress of several devotional works, among them of *The Portrait of a Perfect and an Imperfect Nun*, a book displaying so much spiritual acumen, that if entitled "The Portrait of a Consistent and a Half-hearted Christian," it would not be unworthy of a place beside the soul-searching treatises of her Puritan contemporaries. It draws a vivid picture of the blessedness felt by those who devote themselves entirely to God, and consecrate every thought and faculty to his service, as well as of the misery and evil consequent upon serving him with a divided mind.

In consequence of her fame as a reformer, Angélique was appointed to the management of other religious houses, whose inmates were so utterly refractory, and even vicious, that it needed all the power of her mingled strength and purity—that rare union, which has been said to constitute the "nature of angels"—and all the lowly, winning kindness of companions whom she had trained into like-mindedness with herself, to gain the mastery over their stubborn hearts. Very beautiful are the instances of evil overcome with good—of patience silently but surely fulfilling her perfect work—recorded by Angélique's biographers; yet, as most of these occurred before Jacqueline Pascal's birth, more light may be thrown on her character and history by leaving them untold, and stating in their stead some of the observances which the ladies of Port Royal were bound to fulfil.

St François de Sales,* the Bishop of Geneva, and his

* A saying of this prelate is quoted in the Memoirs of Halyburton, the Scotch saint and scholar, "That as a man, covered with vermin, instead of vainly attempting to detach them one by one, plunges into a bath, and rises thence refreshed and clean, so the believer, when discouraged by the sense of his own

l. foundress of the Order of the
Mad. de Sevigné, were among
, and materially aided in
ian character. One of his
o be weary in well-doing : " O
imagine that the work of your
easy one. Cherry-trees bear fruit
planted, but that fruit is small and
the palm, the prince of trees, requires, it
years before it is mature enough to bring
A lukewarm degree of piety may be acquired
ut the perfection to which we aspire, oh ! my
ghter, must be the growth of long and weary years."

After Angélique's government, the number of nuns and
ices greatly increased. The want of funds never made
her hesitate in admitting any of whose vocation she was
assured, neither was her confidence in God's good providence
ever disappointed. But the lack of accommodation for so
many persons, together with the dampness of the marshes
around Port Royal, which was very injurious to health,
induced Mad. Arnauld to purchase a large house in the Fau-
bourg St Jacques, Paris, and fit it up as a convent. Thither
her daughter and the community removed in 1626 ; and
soon afterwards Angélique, who had always felt that the
fraud practised in order to secure her nomination rendered
it null and void in the sight of God, obtained permission to
resign, and succeeded in making the office of Abbess elective
and triennial.

About 1631, the Duke de Longueville's first wife, wishing
to found a nunnery in honour of the Holy Sacrament, selected
Mère Angélique as its Abbess. Two prelates, the Archbishop
of Sens and the Bishop of Langres, took charge of the insti-
exceeding sinfulness, should at once have recourse to his Saviour, remembering
that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'

tution, but did not long agree concerning its management. They quarrelled over a little book of devotion written by Mère Agnes for the use of the new sisterhood, called *Le Chapelet Secret du Saint Sacrement*, which was accidentally made public and excited much discussion. An appeal to Rome was the result. The Pope, without censuring the work, suppressed it for the sake of peace. Among its defenders, however, had been M. de St Cyran,* a man of eminent holiness, at the head of what was afterwards termed the Jansenist party in France; and this fact, which led to his more intimate acquaintance with Angélique, had the most beneficial effect on her whole after-life. In many respects they were alike, both being unfeignedly humble and self-denying, reverent and sincere; but St Cyran knew more of the glorious truths of the gospel, and, while deeply conscious of personal unworthiness, had also learned that in the Lord Jesus there was righteousness and strength more than sufficient to cancel every sin, and to give support in every need. Angélique could not associate with a man of such ardent piety, and not reflect something of its glow. Under his guidance, all her good impressions were deepened, and she learned that "looking unto Jesus" is the great secret of religious progress as well as hope. Not, however, that either teacher or pupil perceived the uselessness and inconsistency of those superstitious rites with which man's wisdom had deformed, while pretending to decorate, the fair foundations of their faith. They could rest their own hope of salvation on the merits of Christ, and Christ alone;—they could not separate his teachings from those of the false Church which

* It was in reference to this ecclesiastic, then confined in the donjon of Vincennes, by order of Cardinal Richelieu, that the German General, Jean de Werth, while on a visit to Paris, and present at a magnificent ballet composed by Richelieu himself, where a Bishop did the honours of his reception, remarked, "That of all the sights he had beheld in France, nothing astonished him so much as to see bishop at a play-house and saints in prison."

they believed to be his true representative, nor abandon the “ voluntary humility and worshipping of angels” enjoined by her, though denounced by an apostle. Towards the close of Jaqueline Pascal’s *Regulations for Children*, which in their rigid purity seem like a polished shield, so constructed as to ward off from the wearer every possible form of evil, except its own weight, it is painful to find the before-unspotted lustre marred with the rust of mariolatry and saint-worship. After defining prayer in one sentence as “ the turning to God in every need, and especially in seasons of weakness and temptations,” and adding that “ a single glance lifted to him in faith, humility, and constancy, will do more to sustain us than the strongest resolutions, which are useless unless God writes them on the heart by his grace,” &c., it seems incredible that on the next page she should proceed to recommend frequent addresses to the Virgin, St Benedict, and the other patron-saints of the convent.

“ It may be asked,” says Tregelles,* “ how could men possessed of so much light as Jansenius, St Cyran, and their many followers, live and die in acknowledged fellowship with the Church of Rome ? To explain this strange inconsistency, we may refer to Martin Luther. He had learned the gospel of Christ, but it was the actings of Rome against him that taught him the depth of evil which is found in the Romish system. Thus, in his earlier preaching, it is said of him by Melancthon, ‘ He explained that sin is freely pardoned on account of God’s Son, and that man receives this blessing through faith. He in no way interfered with the usual ceremonies. The established discipline had not in all his order a more faithful observer and defender. But he laboured more to make all understand the grand and essential doctrines of conversion, of the forgiveness of sins, of faith, and of the true

* *The Jansenists, a chapter in Church History*, by S. P. Tregelles.

consolations of the cross.' This may explain an inconsistency, which in itself can never be defended. The accusation of Protestantism was in after-years one great hindrance to the Jansenists in looking simply to revealed truth."

The later persecutions of Port Royal did much to emancipate its adherents from their slavish subjection to the tyranny of Rome. The flail of persecution performed its old office of parting the chaff from the wheat, and this may be one reason why God in infinite wisdom permitted it to fall so heavily. Mysterious as the complete crushing of the Port Royalists under the might of Jesuit hatred appears, it was none the less a fulfilment of prophecy. They would not obey the command, "Come out of her, my people, lest ye be partakers of her plagues," and Rome was suffered to drive them from her bosom by injustice and oppression, although in so doing she identified herself with Jesuitism—the worst and most repelling phase of Romanism—and compelled its unhappy victims to take a stand apart from her. What, for instance, can be more beautiful than the reply of the captive nun, Gertrude de Valois, to the Bishop who told her, that unless she consented to sign the formulary against Jansenism, she should be deprived of the last sacraments, and her body should be thrown on a dunghill?—"I do not think your lordship will be able to discover any place to cast my body where my Saviour cannot find and raise it up at the last day." And the modern Jansenists of Holland—a pious, though not a numerous body—still contend, as did their predecessors, that the condemnation of Quesnel in the notorious bull *Unigenitus* was unjust,—that the authority of a general council is superior to that of the Pope—and that, could an honest council be convened, it would unquestionably reverse the papal decision in regard to Quesnel's work. Thus their union with Rome is virtually severed, although, whenever the elect a new bishop or archbishop, notice of the fact is

regularly sent to Rome, and the approval of the Holy See demanded, which as regularly returns the compliment by a decree of excommunication issued against them as schismatics. The notification is of course a mere matter of form, and like the Spanish *hidalgo*, who places house and property at the disposal of his guest, the Jansenists would be greatly astonished were the offer accepted. But Rome has not the grace to imitate their courtesy ; she, on the contrary, denies that they have the right to own a house at all without a lease from her, and her answer to their invitation is a notice to quit.*

To resume the history of *Angélique* and Port Royal. The want of a sufficient endowment and the death of Mad. de Longueville, caused her scheme to be abandoned. The nuns of the Holy Sacrament returned to their old home in Port Royal, and the Abbess took her place among the lowest of the lowly, as if she had never known what it was to command. In 1642 she was re-elected, and continued at the head of the convent for the next twelve years, aided by her sister Agnes, both being regarded with the most enthusiastic affection by the nuns, and exercising all the influence and talents bestowed upon them with a single eye to God's glory.

In 1646, Mère *Angélique* undertook the building of the Church of Port Royal de Paris. Before its commencement, she and her nuns offered up prayers for the space of one entire year, that God would be pleased to manifest his will concerning it. This was in accordance with one of M. de St Cyran's maxims, "Never to undertake anything of importance without first presenting it one hundred times to God in prayer, because of the slowness with which his vast designs

* This interchange of civilities and rebuffs having lasted for a century and a half, has lately been stopped by the Pope's appointment of a Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, whose claim, however, was obstinately resisted by the heretics of Holland.

are ordinarily evolved." The way of duty, then, seemed plain before her, and after the church was finished, she obtained permission to incorporate the two institutions of Port Royal and the Holy Sacrament into one. The changes necessary were few and unimportant; some additional prayers had to be daily offered, and the black scapulary (a garment worn over the shoulders by monks and nuns, hanging down before and behind, emblematic of the yoke of Christ) usual in Cistercian houses, was exchanged for a white one, having a large scarlet cross upon the breast, to signify the two colours of bread and wine. This habit was assumed in 1647, and the convent ever afterwards bore the name of Port Royal du Saint Sacrement.

Before the death of M. de Saint Cyran, which occurred eight months after that of Cardinal Richelieu, in 1643, had released him from prison, he had persuaded Angélique that it was hardly right to have allowed the consideration of bodily health to occasion the complete removal of the community from a place so well calculated for holy meditation and perfect isolation from the world as was Port Royal des Champs. Thither, accordingly, in 1648, she returned with a dozen or more nuns, and was welcomed back by the tears and blessings of the poor whom her charity had formerly succoured. The deserted convent had during her absence been occupied by a company of recluses, disciples of M. de Saint Cyran, but they gladly retired to a farm in the vicinity, and her admirable powers of methodical arrangement soon placed the affairs of the house on a better footing than before her departure. Both this convent and that of Paris had the same internal laws, and received the same instructions; the latter, however, being the larger, took the lead, and the inmates of both made their profession there.

It now only remains to give some idea of the *Constitutions* of Port Royal, which, about 1648, were for the first time

embodied and printed. The body of the work was written by Mère Agnes, and, as the volume itself is now very rare, a slight sketch of its requirements will shew the nature of that "rational piety" which so fascinated Jacqueline Pascal. These rules, it is stated in the preface, were no ideal picture of unattainable virtues, but the actual result of many years' experience and practice.

"The Convent was placed under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Paris, and he had the privilege of appointing a Superior, whose office was to visit it from time to time, examine into its condition, and aid the Abbess in enforcing the laws. These visitations were always preceded and closed by the prayers of the sisterhood for the divine blessing ; and on his arrival, they were all assembled at the grating of the church, that he might greet and bless them. He then gave private audience to every nun, beginning and ending with the Abbess ; and each was bound to inform him of her own failures in duty, and, in a meek and kindly spirit, of anything that might be amiss in the Convent. In listening to these complaints, great discretion and discernment were of course needed on his part. Having taken the keys from the Abbess, he next passed into the interior, and made a tour of inspection through its various apartments. Then came a general assembly or chapter, in which he exhorted or commended his hearers, as the case might require, and a solemn service in the church closed the whole. The particulars were then recorded for future reference, but no remarks were ever allowed on what had taken place during the visit.

"The confessors of the nuns were selected with great caution, and attended to them weekly. Each sister had the privilege of demanding what confessor she chose, subject to the approval of the Abbess and Archbishop, but this was seldom done. All who wished to confess were exhorted to a rigid self-examination, and deep repentance, and told to judge

of their guilt, less by its outward appearance than by the state of heart that prompted the transgression, remembering that neither confession nor absolution could avail them, unless their secret sins were sincerely hated, searched out, and forsaken.

“The choice of an Abbess, which, after Angélique’s resignation, occurred every three years, was always preceded by a long season of supplication for grace to choose aright. The office was looked upon as far from desirable, on account of the weighty responsibilities attached to it, and indeed it was the custom of the nuns to shrink from every distinction, unfeignedly preferring the lowest place, and only accepting a higher with the deepest humility and self-distrust. They were taught, both by example and precept, that ‘a constant fidelity in little things forms the true grandeur and solidity of the Christian character ;’* that, ‘as to its effects, the perfection of saints on earth is perhaps more perceptible in what they *do not* than in what they *do* ;’† and, therefore, there was among them comparatively little of that striving after power, which, to quote the words of a modern thinker, will make ‘many people astonished, when they get to heaven, to find the angels laying no schemes to be made archangels.’‡ The novices and lay-sisters, who had no vote, spent the time of the election in prayer ;—the professed nuns gave their votes in writing, and the person chosen never knew who voted for her, nor by what majority she was elected. ‘No Abbess,’ say the *Constitutions*, ‘has any reason to hope that her election is of God, unless she sincerely desires to take the lowest place and to escape the highest, knowing that no situation is so exposed to perils and evils, as that of one who has to conduct others, unless God himself be her guide. She must distinguish herself by an excess of charity rather than by authority,

* M. de St Cyran.

† Ibid.

‡ Guesses at Truth.

and veil her power with all a mother's tenderness, excusing the faults of others as much as possible, strengthening the weak, and bearing long and patiently what is amiss ere she corrects it. Is her disposition naturally mild ? let her strive to acquire force of character : is it energetic ? let her temper it with gentleness. She must neither flatter nor accept flattery, but use her authority in moderation ; teach less by word than by example ; and serve her companions in every office of charity with a zeal proportioned to the height of her position, remembering our Saviour's words, ' Whosoever is chief among you, let him be the servant of all.' It was, moreover, her duty to provide preachers for all suitable occasions ; to watch over the bodily welfare of her charge ; to allow slight indulgences to the infirm ; and forbid the practice of austerities that might be injurious, while the sisters were bound to yield an unmurmuring obedience to her behests, and to aid her with their sympathies and prayers. Her personal accommodations were not at all superior to theirs ; she had a cell in the common dormitory, without either fire or attendance, except in case of extreme age or infirmity. She was also required to avoid mingling with worldly society ; to seek strength for her onerous duties by constant intercourse with Heaven ; and to possess a greater love for solitude and silence than was usual even in that silent convent, which sought to rival the old monastery of Clairvaux, where, in St Bernard's time, the only sounds to be heard by day or night were the clatter of monkish tools and the voice of psalms.

" Next in rank to the Abbess came the Prioress, chosen by her to fill her post during absence ; to arrange the nuns' duties, and inspect their performance ; to watch over the Abbess's health, and relieve her from all unnecessary care. Various inferior offices were filled by other sisters. One had charge of the refectory, another of the wardrobe, a third of

provisions, &c. ; but there is no need of enumerating the duties of any except the Sub-prioress and Mistress of the Novices, both of which posts were afterwards filled by Jacqueline Pascal during part of her stay at Port Royal.

“ The Sub-prioress assumed the duties of the Prioress in the latter’s absence, but was not allowed to use the same freedom in reproofing faults, her business being to note what was wrong, and report it on the Abbess’s return, not in any spirit of suspicion or exaggeration, but in a truthful and loving manner. She had also to visit the dormitories at night, to put out the lights, and ascertain that every sister was safe in her own cell.

“ The responsibility of the Mistress of the Novices was much greater. She took charge of the sisters of the white veil for three years after their entrance ; taught them what outward observances were enjoined, and frequently explained to them the solemn nature of their obligations, and the need of continued prayer and effort, if they desired to grow in grace,—striving to imbue them with a delight in silent communion with God, and a true submission to his holy will.

“ Great discrimination was exercised in the reception of inmates. The sisters were strictly forbidden all attempts at attracting persons of wealth or distinction ; and if any such presented themselves, they were admitted with reluctance, and only on exhibiting the most decided marks of piety. Only a moderate pension was ever accepted, no matter how rich the candidate might be, and she was advised to distribute the rest of her possessions among the poor, selecting her beneficiaries according to the counsel of some competent persons unconnected with Port Royal. In case of poverty there was seldom any difficulty to be encountered.*

* The Abbess Angélique once admitted two sisters as candidates for the veil. One was penniless; the other possessed a thousand crowns, her godmother’s legacy.

Bodily weakness formed no disqualification, only the preliminary probation was made more severe; because it was deemed that greater piety was necessary in order to support patiently long hours of solitude or sickness in an infirmary, than to join in the social worship or active pursuits of the community. Novices were admitted by vote of the nuns. They were not to be fed with milk and honey by being humoured and treated gently, but with the strong meat of self-denial and humiliations. For instance, one of Angélique's own sisters, Anne Eugenie by name, a young lady of very refined and fastidious tastes, was ordered to clean out the poultry-yard and wash dishes in the kitchen. One of her former friends, an ecclesiastic named Père Suffrant, called to see her, and, as his time was limited, she hastened to the grate in her working-dress, with a large apron, and a knife hanging from her girdle. He remarked that he had never seen her so well dressed, and asked if she had quite given up the use of pomatum for her hands, referring to her old fondness for such articles of luxury. She answered, laughing, that the hot dish-water did quite as well, and she needed nothing better.

“Another novice was sent to occupy a cell supposed to be furnished, but which really contained only a few bundles of fagots. Presuming that she was to have no other couch, and not daring to complain, the poor girl wrapped herself in her mantle, and lay on the fagots for many nights, until the mistake was accidentally discovered and remedied.

“The sisters were never allowed to receive presents either for themselves or the church, nor to ask for aid on any pretext whatever, under penalty of excommunication. But if, as sometimes happened, their lavish charities left them in

After a time, the vocation of the heiress seemed a true one, but her sister's failed. Angélique sent the latter away, after presenting her with the thousand crowns that had belonged to the other, whom she admitted into the community without any dowry at all.

actual want of the necessaries of life, the Abbess might, after a season of patience and privation, mention the fact to some confidential friend, and accept what was required for the passing emergency, but nothing further. Their legal difficulties were few, since the renunciation of every superfluity, and the sturdy independence which led them to refuse large endowments, cut the roots of lawsuits, while it was their maxim to bear much injustice rather than seek for judicial redress. Yet, in extreme cases, after every measure of conciliation had been tried, they were not forbidden to defend the rights of the convent. Every effort was made to destroy the esteem of secular advantages, and to teach the nuns to love poverty, because Jesus Christ was poor. 'My daughters,' often said Angélique, 'we have taken a vow of poverty, but we can hardly call ourselves poor, when so many kind friends are always ready to share with us their abundance.' The exquisite delicacy and disinterestedness, which marked all the pecuniary transactions of the convent, are beautifully displayed in Jacqueline Pascal's narrative of the trials preceding her own profession.

"The *Constitutions* provide, in the first place, for the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament—a term which, though startling to Protestant ears, was less formidable in reality than in name. It signified that every nun was required to spend a portion of the day in silent prayer before the high altar of the church; and to wait there until relieved by one of her companions. They had no set form of prayer for the occasion, but were to invoke the special aid of the Holy Spirit to bring their wishes into accordance with God's will; and, not dwelling on their own personal wants or sins, were to forget self, and plead earnestly for the good of the Church universally, and the extension of Christ's kingdom.

"They were taught to hope that, by thus endeavouring to imitate the angels who rest not day nor night from God's

service, and expelling, as far as they could, all earthly interests from the heart, Christ would fill it with the precious balm of his grace, and perfume their poor prayers with the much incense of his own merits. The remembrance of this hallowed hour was also to accompany them through the rest of the day. Their motto was to be, 'I sleep, but my heart waketh,'—meaning that no occupation ought to distract their minds from continued prayer and communion with Jesus.

"They observed the routine of fasts, festivals, and observances common to all Romanists, and were allowed opportunities of private devotion besides, being often reminded of St Bernard's saying, 'that true prayer is not a human, but a celestial gift, the fruit of the Holy Spirit praying in us and with us.' With these views of prayer, need it be added that the Holy Scriptures were highly prized? The Bible was daily read aloud, and the nuns were advised to learn portions of it by heart. 'Let them try to fill the treasury of their minds with God's Word, which is more desirable than gold or precious stones, so will the languishing flame of devotion in their souls be quickened by contact with that divine truth, for the Word of the Lord is full of fire.'

"Strict silence was enjoined on them for many hours of each day, except in case of absolute necessity, and even then the use of signs was recommended. The Abbess Agnes was once summoned from the Refectory, where all the sisters were assembled, to learn the fact of Cardinal Richelieu's death, and M. de St Cyran's release from prison. It was an hour of silence, and she felt equally unwilling to infringe the rule or withhold the tidings. In this strait, she bethought herself of taking off her girdle and rending it in twain; the emblem of recovered freedom was at once understood, and every face in the assembly grew radiant, though every tongue was mute.

"The nuns were allowed an hour every day in which to

make confession of losses or accidents, to own slight failures in duty, and receive directions for the morrow. This was followed by an hour of conference, frequently spent in the open air, and each sister was then permitted to speak freely, provided she did so with discretion and grave politeness, as well as care not to interrupt others, or put herself unduly forward. But no approaches to mirth or raillery were for a moment tolerated. St Benedict's rule never allowed the bow of thought to be unbent ; all play of wit, all lively speech, was reckoned sinful, and the souls consecrated to God were bidden to seek recreation in discussing topics of a serious nature, not likely to undermine their religious gravity and strength. The nuns of Port Royal usually spent their conference hour in speaking of texts of Scripture, or questions of conscience ; they never referred to their own personal feelings, views, or temptations, lest the sympathy of others should induce a craving for human praise.

During Angélique's life, she was often consulted in regard to the meaning of Scripture, and her remarks being both interesting and original, some of the nuns undertook, at the suggestion of her nephew Lemaître, to write them down, and after her death they were published. Had she known what was going forward, she would probably have declined speaking at all ; for her dislike of notoriety was strong and real. When on her death-bed, she noticed a nun taking down some of her observations, and bade her burn the paper. She was reminded that the dying words of Madame Suireau des Agnes, a former Abbess, had been made very useful to survivors. 'Ah,' said she, 'that dear Mère was very humble and very simple-minded—but I am neither.'

"Industry was a positive duty, each sister being expected to perform a certain amount of work daily, the more humiliating the better, and to love her task, because the Saviour stooped to practise a lowly trade, and so did his apostles.

They made their own habits and shoes, as well as linen and ornaments for the church (which, however, were remarkable for simplicity of form and material), and the wafers and wax candles. Bookbinding was also one of their occupations, and they made lanterns, candlesticks, and other useful articles of tin, but neither embroideries nor artificial flowers were ever introduced. When at work, they were to be silent and meditative ; the example of a certain sister Isabelle Agnes de Chateau-Neuf being often quoted, who passed an entire Lent in the kitchen, where all the sisters were continually coming and going, without speaking a single word. The stewardess took charge of every article as it was finished, and afterwards distributed what was wanted in the various cells.

“ Many of the nuns were occupied in the education of children. Only twelve, however, were admitted into the classes under the age of ten, lest the incessant care required by very young children should distract the attention of their teachers from other duties. Little orphans were gladly welcomed, and treated with especial tenderness ; and the sisters were taught that it was their duty to bear with meek patience the fatigue and anxiety inseparable from the oversight of the young, out of love to that Saviour who for their sakes became a child.

“ Those possessing good voices were carefully trained to sing in the choir, under the direction of a leader, who had to strain every nerve to prevent the possibility of a mistake or failure in the worship of the sanctuary ; yet was not to assume undue authority, or permit her own voice to be heard above the others, unless in attempting to supply a deficiency in their performance. The nuns were exhorted to subdue all vain complacency in their musical knowledge, or in the sweet accord of their voices, and to desire only the perfection of God’s service and the edification of his worshippers. In case of cold or other illness, the singers were

excused, and the infirm were allowed to keep their seats, since, 'although an irregularity of posture offends the eye, it edifies the mind, by teaching that Christian unity consists less in outward uniformity than in a spirit of kindness and consideration for the weak.'

" Each nun had her own cell, where, when not otherwise engaged, she passed her time in reading, work, or prayer ; but to enter the cell of another, unless by permission of the Abbess, was strictly forbidden. Their food was simple, but sufficient in quantity ; they were neither encouraged in extraordinary fastings, nor in finding fault with the viands set before them, which were served on earthenware, with pitchers and mugs of brown stone, and wooden spoons. One of the nuns read aloud from some devotional work during the repast.

" Their clothes, though marked with their own names, were not kept under their own care, and were made of very coarse materials. Friends were allowed to make occasional visits, but the nuns might not testify any anxiety to receive them, nor any curiosity in regard to secular affairs ; neither could they reveal what was going forward in the convent,—to prevent which, another sister always accompanied them to the parlour, and heard what passed during the interview, but never made any comment, unless something very wrong called for the Abbess's interference. Letters were rarely written, and never sent without inspection ; nor were they ever very affectionate, the best mode of expressing love being held to consist in constant prayer for its object.

" Their faults were divided into four classes. The first would now-a-days hardly be deemed faults at all, such as words spoken at random, hasty answers, momentary impatience, trivial curiosity, the non-improvement of time, giving way to sudden laughter, talking in too loud a tone, or making a noise so as to disturb others. The usual penance consisted in

the offender's asking pardon on her knees. The Abbess Angélique was once asked in conference, if she remembered passing through the dormitory late at night, when one of the nuns, not knowing who it was, called out, 'What can you be thinking of, my sister, to make such a noise?' on which the Abbess promptly knelt down and begged forgiveness, while the poor nun, startled at the discovery, had not sufficient presence of mind to excuse herself for the mistake. The Abbess replied that she had forgotten the circumstance, but no excuse was needed, since she had merely done her duty.

"Faults of the second degree consisted in coming late to divine service, or behaving with irreverence when there; speaking rudely, thoughtlessly, or unkindly to others; shewing anger in harsh or hasty speech; bearing malice for an offence, or deliberately breaking the law of silence, &c. They were punished by the offender's eating off the ground, repeating prayers with her arms crossed or stretched out, wearing a bandage over the eyes, kissing the sisters' feet, &c.

"Grave faults, or those of the third degree, comprehended all violations of the rule of obedience, especially if persisted in; all murmuring, or rude speeches made to the superior; also the manifesting aversion to another sister, or criticising her imperfections in a contemptuous spirit. To raise false reports, to hide from the Abbess what she ought to know, to remain too long in the parlour, to invite the visits of secular persons, or write letters without permission, to speak so low to a visitor that the sister present could not hear what was said, to shew a distaste for religious exercises before persons of the world, and to cherish a spirit of worldliness, levity, and mockery, were all grave faults, which the Abbess was to repress as best she might, and to punish when necessary. If deliberately persisted in, or if the guilty person proceeded to

beat or abuse her companions, and to break her solemn vows, 'which,' say the *Constitutions*, 'may God forbid,' she was then to be separated from the rest of the community, and the degree of her punishment left to the discretion of the Abbess and Superior, who might not restore her to favour until fully satisfied of her repentance and amendment.

"Great care was taken of the sisters in case of sickness, the office of nurse being eagerly coveted, and every reasonable indulgence allowed to the patients, who nevertheless were not encouraged to be fretful or talkative, but exhorted to endure with patience the will of God, and seek by silence and submission to increase their spiritual vigour, according to the promise, 'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.' They remained in the infirmary till convalescent, and were not suffered to recommence their duties until their former strength was fully regained.

"Every religious consolation was granted to the dying. The entire sisterhood were always summoned to witness a death, and if the confessors were absent, it became the Abbess's duty to recite the last prayers, and soothe the departing spirit. Deceased nuns were buried in the cemetery with great simplicity, and a short sketch of their lives was inserted in the monthly necrology of Port Royal."

The body of the *Constitutions* closes as follows:—

"Let not the nuns build any confidence on their daily observances and good works, but let them hope in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ; and whatever be the good they have effected or the progress they have made in religious perfection, let them feel with St Benedict that these things are but a commencement, and cry with the Psalmist, 'I have sought thee with my whole heart, O let me not wander from thy commandments.' Let them work out their salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that unless their good works, however numerous, be prompted by true faith in God, and

they are clothed with humility, they cannot hope for security against their great enemy, who, being himself proud, has especial power over the children of pride, so that in imagining themselves to have succeeded in defeating him, they do but prove him to have won a more subtle and dangerous victory over them. And since the life of believers upon earth is one long warfare and tribulation, let them continually remember the advice of St Bernard, 'Never to distrust the mercy of God, but to hope all things from the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we are delivered from the bondage of sin.' Let them seek to be thus delivered with deep humility, continual sighing, and many tears, feeling that no attendance upon the means of grace will be of any avail unless God looks down and blesses them. 'For if the Lord keep not the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Therefore let us look unto him until he compassionate us.'

" Yet, as the husbandman is not satisfied with a bare acknowledgment that without the influence of sun and dew his toil must be fruitless, but labours and digs the earth according to God's command, that it may be ready to receive a blessing from above, so is it comparatively easy to confess that human efforts are feeble and futile without God's help. We ought, while owning that neither he that planteth nor he that watereth is anything, to be also diligent in prayer and in the active use of all those means which God and his saints have indicated for our assistance, remembering St Augustine's words: 'We should strive to subdue our corruptions by constant effort and earnest prayer, yet maintaining at the same time a conviction that prayers and efforts are alike worthless, unless inspired by God's grace.' Thus, never trusting in ourselves, and always lifting up our hearts to God, we shall render unto him, our Sovereign Master, perpetual thanksgivings, and when we glory, glory in him alone.

" Let the sisters, therefore, evermore pray for an increase

of faith, so that in temptation, which is an inward persecution, they may remain firmly bound unto the Lord their God, and give no heed to the suggestions of the adversary. For if they resolutely hold to the obedience of faith,—if the remembrance of God's great goodness to them in the gift of a Redeemer, and a sense of the vileness and nothingness of things temporal, compared with the hope that is laid up for us in heaven, be impressed on their minds by a lively yet humble faith,—they will easily repulse the allurements of their great enemy, and quench in the flames of that living faith the fiery darts with which he would fain destroy them. God in his mercy grant it, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and the help of the Holy Spirit! Amen."

Bound up with the *Constitutions* are, *Advice to the Mistress of the Novices*, *Meditations to be used on taking the Veil*,* and Jaqueline Pascal's *Regulations for Children*. There is also a small tract entitled *The Spirit of Port Royal*, from which a few extracts have been made:—

“ The spirit cultivated in this convent is difficult to describe, for it is in no way founded upon or affected by the wisdom of this world, and therefore does not aim at a mere external perfection. It desires to seek after God, and to obey him in all things ; it teaches the creature to conceive of God as the inconceivable, not only because his infinite greatness is incomprehensible, but because we cannot of ourselves form any idea of God at all, still less can our ideas of him be worthy of his character. And, therefore, the thought that HE IS GOD is enough to imbue the believing soul with a sense of reverence and entire dependence on his divine Majesty, and to teach it to expect every needful blessing in

* In one of these occurs the following quaint comment on the text, “ She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework” (Ps. xiv. 14)—“ The work of sanctification carried on in the believer's heart, is a slow and costly one, and cannot be completed without many a severe prick in the process.”

accordance with the order of his providence, though not of its own wishes. Resting on this foundation, the nuns do not expect to attain a high degree of religious perfection, though they eagerly desire it, for they know that God will give them precisely that amount of grace which they need, and which is best for them, while they are themselves incapable of judging whether some long-coveted attainment in piety might not, if attained, be the cause of their ruin, by fostering self-complacency and leading them to appropriate the credit due only to God. Neither are they taught to wish for great gifts in prayer, or for remarkable fervency of spirit. Such extraordinary emotions of mind are more to be dreaded than desired, because of the danger of self-deception. Their devotion rather consists in a continual remembrance of God, in looking to him and referring everything to his will. And if unable at all times to maintain this frame of mind, or if interrupted by distracting thoughts, they are not affrighted, knowing that the grace of God in the heart is subject to many fluctuations, and that our best intentions must be useless, and even worse than useless, unless God restrains our native corruption and defends us from the power of Satan, who is ever trying to sow tares in our hearts, which may choke the good seed of God's Word.

" The mutual love which we strive to cherish is not kept up by caresses or familiar talk. The nuns know that this divine virtue, being shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, ought to be treasured there, without external manifestations, except at seasons appointed of God. Therefore, although in consequence of this concealment our love may not be outwardly displayed, its existence may not be doubted. The hidden treasure is there, and will not fail to appear at the fitting moment, since, instead of diminishing, it rather grows in secret, according to our Saviour's words : ' Unto him that hath shall be given, while from him that

hath not' (meaning those who possess the semblance but not the reality of virtue) 'shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.'

" The government of the convent is kind, impartial, and firm. *Kind*, because those in authority do not lord it over the weak, and the latter yield a willing, unconstrained obedience. *Impartial*, because those who do well are not praised, neither are those who fail severely blamed, and thus we endeavour to maintain an evenness of mind, which produces meekness in spiritual prosperity, and patience under the deprivation of those blessings whereof God is the sole distributor and sovereign. And *strong*, because the superiors have no respect of persons, and do not fear that their firmness will be looked upon as harshness, while the honour of God, and the wish to do his will, form the moving springs of all their actions.

" Although prizes and preferring the privilege of solid religious instruction above every earthly blessing, we are well aware that this is not the chief good, and is not to be depended on as sufficient for salvation ; we seek, therefore, to look to God as our Great Taskmaster, and the only source whence is derivable that help which we continually need.

" We endeavour to cherish a spirit of poverty and industry, and readily renounce all superfluities, and whatever tends to charm the senses. In fact, the history of this convent presents a species of contest between its rulers and the Almighty ; his overruling providence continually supplying their every want, while they, not daring to presume upon his bounty, nor to expect their undeserved prosperity to last, strive on the other hand to be prepared for indigence, if it should please him to send it, and, in the exercise of a wise discretion, to relieve the miseries of the poor as far as they can.

" Above all, we wish to maintain a spirit of prayer, which

looks to the Saviour for grace, and expects to receive it in answer to the petitions offered through his mediation, because he made himself the partaker of all our sorrows and the ransomer of those who turn to him—and also a constant devotion to God's Word. We prefer it to every other book, and, instead of being troubled by the mysteries we do not understand, we try to meditate on those we do, and leave to God the rest, never wearying of its blessed truths, but always listening to them with the deepest attention and delight, and finding therein an exhaustless fountain of strength."

The effect of their intercourse with Port Royal is very visible in the following joint letter addressed by Pascal and Jacqueline to Madame Perier, and written in Jacqueline's hand. She often acted as her brother's scribe, and the letter being characteristic of Pascal, both in sentiment and style, M. Faugère thinks it probable that he dictated it throughout, especially as some of its ideas were afterwards reproduced in the *Pensées de Pascal*, and elsewhere. But we cannot doubt that the feelings expressed in the letter were shared by her who wrote them down :—

"April 1, 1648.

"We cannot tell whether this letter is destined, like the others, to have no formal close; but we do know that when writing to you, we never wish to leave off. We are now reading M. de St Cyran's letter, *De la Vocation* (on calling), which was printed a short time since, without approbation or privilege, and has given great offence. You shall have it as soon as we have finished, and we shall be glad to learn what your opinion of it is, and my father's also. Its tone is very high.

"We have begun to write you many times, but were induced to break off by the example and conversations, or discouragements, if you choose to call them so, of which you

are aware.* Yet, after procuring all the light upon this point in our power, I cannot but believe that, while caution is needful, and there are times when topics of a religious nature ought to be shunned, yet this necessity does not affect us. Our perfect mutual confidence, the conviction that our only aim in making such communications is to glorify God, and our slight intercourse with persons not belonging to the family, are reasons strong enough to do away with every scruple in regard to informing one another of the feelings which God has inspired within us. And if to these considerations be added the ties of nature between us, now strengthened by those of grace, it appears to me that, far from being forbidden, we are actually bound to rejoice together over God's goodness to us as a household. For the blessing of being thus spiritually united is infinite, and ought to make us both grateful and glad. And, indeed, it is only since our conversion (which M. de St Cyran says should be called the beginning of existence) that we have a right to consider our relationship as perfected; God, who had before united us by the tie of blood, having now graciously united us in soul, and given us a place among his redeemed.

"We entreat you never to forget this, or let a day pass without reviewing God's dealings with us. He has not only made us kindred in Christ, but children of one father in a twofold sense, since, as you know, my father's conversion preceded ours. Ought we not to be astonished at God's mercy in thus doubly allying us—both in emblem and reality? for, as we have often remarked when with you, corporeal things are but the types of spiritual, and God employs visible objects to represent those which are invisible. This view of the relation between the things of nature and those of grace takes in a wide range of profitable thoughts,

* Alluding to the extreme reserve in speaking of personal feeling or religious experience practised by the Jansenists and inculcated on their disciples.

and demands our frequent and serious attention ; but having formerly discussed it with some minuteness, we will not enlarge upon the theme to-day, for there is not space in a letter to do it justice, neither can you have forgotten a truth of such importance and, as I think, so indispensable.

“ Our sinful nature keeps us, so to speak, entangled among the snares of time and sense ; and this entanglement being at once the cause and punishment of our past offences, as well as a continual temptation to commit new ones, we ought therefore to turn these very accessories of our fall into stepping-stones for our recovery, and to improve the advantages afforded us by a merciful God, who in our temporal blessings sets before us an ever-present type of the celestial riches we have lost, and surrounds us, even in the captivity to which his justice has reduced us, with so many objects calculated to yield a perpetual lesson, if we would but learn.

“ We ought to consider ourselves as criminals in a prison hung around with pictures of our Liberator, and the necessary instructions for obtaining our freedom. Yet it must be owned that these holy hieroglyphics cannot be deciphered without a supernatural light, for the very things which speak of God and manifest his glory to them who know and love him, serve to hide him from those who know him not. Persons thus blinded by the darkness of this world grope after earthly things, because they love them, and look upon them as the chief good. But in so doing they are guilty of sacrilege, for God is the sole origin of man’s existence, and ought to be its end. Analogies may indeed exist between things created and the Creator,—the least and meanest objects in nature may, by their unity, be emblems of that perfection of unity which is found in God alone,—yet they have no claim on our sovereign regard, nor can we bestow it upon them without incurring the guilt of idolatry, hateful

alike in the sight of God and man. For what is idolatry but the yielding of such honour to the creature as is due only to the Creator? Scripture is full of instances of God's vengeance upon idolaters, and the first commandments of the decalogue, which include all the rest, particularly forbid the worship of images. Now, since God is far more jealous of our affections than of our external homage, it is plain that no crime can be so wicked and detestable in his sight as supreme love to any creature, no matter what that creature may represent.

“ Those, therefore, to whom God has revealed his own glorious truth, ought to turn earthly blessings into a medium of communion with the Being whose glories they dimly shadow forth, instead of remaining in that state of Jewish and carnal blindness which takes the type for the antitype. And those whom God has, by regeneration, gratuitously withdrawn from their former state of sin (which, being a state of opposition to God, the only Source of true life, is virtual annihilation), are under double obligations to serve and honour him, who not only bestowed on them the boon of existence and a place in his universe at the moment of their creation, but has added to these favours the gift of salvation, and a place in the true temple of his Church. As creatures, they are bound to maintain their rank in the order of creation, not profaning the post they fill ; and as Christians, they should continually aspire to become worthy members of the body of Christ. But while the perfection of everything earthly must of necessity be finite, and therefore a limited degree of perfection is all that can be expected from the lower orders of creation, the children of God should set no bounds to their purity and perfection, because they belong to a divine, an infinitely perfect body ; and Jesus Christ, far from limiting his command of perfection, proposes an infinite model in the words, ‘ Be ye perfect, even as your Father in

heaven is perfect.' It is not merely a common, but a dangerous error which leads some Christians, who nevertheless profess to be very devoted, to persuade themselves that certain attainments in piety insure salvation, and need not be overpassed ; whereas, in reality, there is no point where it is not perilous to halt. We can only escape a fall by climbing continually higher."

CHAPTER IV.

External Opposition.

... was recalled from Normandy in 1648, the
... demanded, at the commencement of the
... the Wars of the Fronde, that all govern-
... should be removed from the provinces.
... Councillor of State on his return to Paris,
... place in the beginning of May.

"A Virgin," says Madame Perier, "thought he ought to
... of my sister's resolution, since she had quite decided
... a nun. My brother undertook to tell him, as
... no one else who could. The proposal surprised
... strangely agitated my father. On the one hand, having
... to love the principles of a pure Christianity, he was
... to have his children like-minded; but, on the other,
... affection for my sister was so deep and tender, that he
... would not resolve to give her up for ever. These conflicting
... thoughts made him at first answer, that he would see and
... think about it. But finally, after some vacillations, he told
... plainly that he would never give his consent, and even
... complained that my brother had encouraged the plan with-
... out knowing whether it would meet his approval. This con-
... sideration made him so angry with my brother and sister,
... that he lost his confidence in them, and ordered an old wait-
... ing woman who had brought them both up to watch over

their movements. This was a great restraint upon my sister, for she could not go to Port Royal except by stealth, nor see M. Singlin without some contrivance and dexterous excuse."

Our sympathies are strongly enlisted on behalf of the poor father, whose resentment at finding both his children in league to deprive him of Jaqueline's society was perfectly natural and justifiable. Yet it is but fair to add, that the latter's friends at Port Royal were very far from advising her to be disobedient. No Jesuitical casuistry was interposed by them between her conscience and the plain command of God: "Obey your parents in all things." Their upright, elevated, self-sacrificing characters, so beautifully developed in Jaqueline's subsequent history, as written by herself, had no affinity with that detestable maxim, "The end sanctifies the means." On the contrary, it was their endeavour to strengthen her faith, and encourage her in patient submission, by assurances like these:—

" You are already a nun, my dear sister, because you have determined to obey the call which God has given you; but you will cease to be one, if you wish to forestall the precise moment of your profession, which God has put in his own power; and until it arrives, he will withhold from you its peculiar mercies." " Yesterday, we had an admirable sermon from M. Singlin; I could have wished you had been there, but for the fear that it might have excited your desire (of taking the veil), and made your present state of suspense more painful. God is now punishing you for your past indifference to his claims. Our hunger and thirst after righteousness may be long-protracted, but cannot expiate our past distaste for holy things." " God himself often supplies the wants for which we have in vain had recourse to creatures." " Your letters, my dear sister, shew us plainly that the hour is not yet come; it is therefore our duty to wait for it in perfect submission to God's decrees, on which

all our welfare depends. You do not doubt that God is all-powerful ; but we are too apt to long for his power to take precedence of his will, so that we may be indulged in our own will, which we believe to be his also ; but this is not always the case. He often suffers us to feel desires which he does not intend to fulfil, and manifests this by the hindrances that his providence interposes. Therefore we ought to receive such delays with as much satisfaction as if our wishes had been granted. They seem to me, my dear sister, a sign that God is trusting himself in us, or rather trusting the grace which he has given us, and which he knows to be so strong that it will not falter, so persevering that it cannot fail." "It is your duty to follow God's guidance, and to endure with meekness the delays occasioned by his providence. There is quite as much sin in wishing to prevent* the will of God, as there would be in not obeying it at the proper time. If you do not possess your soul in peace and perfect submission, you must cease the repetition of the Lord's Prayer, for the phrase, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' includes the renunciation of every possible wish which does not harmonise with God's will. I do not believe, dear sister, that you can desire to have things arranged in any other way than as God chooses ; for a conventional life will not make you what he designs to have you become, unless you enter upon it in accordance with his will, and at the hour of his appointment. Our Saviour now says to you, as he once did to his apostles,—'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put into his own power.' You are bound to accept the answer given you by your father, as a decree of God, who sees fit to reserve some other season for the gracious fulfilment of those desires which his grace has inspired within you. There

* Here used in the old sense of prevent, to go before.

are persons who would be unfaithful to God, did they not hasten to obey his inward monitions ; you, on the contrary, would be greatly in fault if you were not to submit to the delays he has ordained for you. And you are to do this, not merely because you must, but willingly, by calmly yielding to God's appointments, and thus making your necessary obedience a voluntary one. For the words of Scripture are true,—‘The law is not made for a righteous man,’ which means that the will of the just being one with God's will, they obey his laws and precepts in perfect liberty, without any constraint. And if you are not able to do this fully, try at least to submit in the manner that our Saviour taught us, when, partaking of the infirmities of our nature, he said unto his Father, ‘Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done,’ thereby shewing that he was conscious of a will which shrank from the death appointed for him by God's will.” “I have no message for you from our mother (Angélique), but she feels as truly your spiritual mother as if you were already within the convent-walls. Those who love God have the advantage of loving their neighbours with sincerity, and pouring out their heart before him on their behalf. May we be of their number, my very dear sister, and let the dying words of our departed friend be engraved upon our souls,—‘Happy they who know none but God, and who are satisfied with God ! ’ ” “Neither the life of a nun, nor any other mode of life, can produce this state of heart ; yet, without it all external worship is vain, and even our very prayers are fruitless, if the soul does not submit itself entirely to God, and find its nourishment in doing his will, according to our Saviour's words,—‘My meat and my drink is to do the will of my Father.’ ”*

* Letters of the M^{re} Agnes to Jacqueline Pascal. The extracts in the text are taken from letters of different dates, all referring to the same subject, but too long to be inserted in full.

Let us now see the effect of these salutary counsels on Jacqueline. "The difficulties she met with," says Madame Perier, "did not lessen her zeal; and having renounced the world in heart, she no longer took the same delight in amusements as formerly: so that, although for a while she carefully concealed her intention of devoting herself to God, it was easily perceived; and then, finding that she could no longer hide it, she gradually withdrew from society, and broke off suddenly from all her acquaintance. For this, a favourable opportunity was offered by my father's changing his residence. She made no acquaintances in her new neighbourhood, and escaped from her old ones by never visiting them. Thus she found herself at liberty to live in solitude, which became so pleasant to her that she insensibly retired even from the family circle, and sometimes spent the whole day alone in her own chamber. It is impossible to say how she employed herself in this perfect solitude, but each day it could be perceived that she was visibly growing in grace, and, though under many restrictions, she did not give up her occasional visits to Port Royal, nor her correspondence with its inmates, which she managed with much tact."

A letter of Jacqueline's to her father, requesting leave to make a fortnight's "retreat"^{*} at Port Royal, has been preserved. Its eager yet submissive tone shews how ardent was her longing for a monastic life, and probably won the permission requested.

The next document concerning Jacqueline is another joint letter from herself and Pascal to Madame Perier:—

"PARIS, Nov. 5, Afternoon, 1648.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Your letter brought back the remembrance of a dispute, so fully at an end as to be quite for-

* The name given to a period of weeks or months passed in a convent by one not of the house, in the seclusion and sharing the services of its regular inmates.

gotten. Our explanations did indeed revive old grievances, but at the same time our apologies softened my father's resentment. We repeated what you had already said, not knowing that you had said it, and afterwards made verbal excuses, like those which you had written, not knowing that you had sent them. For we were not aware of your proceedings until after we had ourselves done the very same, but as we had no secrets from my father, he explained to us the whole, and did away with our suspicions. You know how their misunderstandings interfere with the peace of home, both externally and internally, and how greatly one needs such a warning as you sent us when it was too late.

“ And now we have a little private scolding for yourself. In the first place, what made you say that you had learnt everything in your letter from me? For I have no recollection of having spoken to you on the subject, which seemed quite new to me. And were what you say true, I should fear that you had learnt the lesson in a wrong spirit, or else you would have lost the remembrance of the human teacher, in thinking of God, who alone can make the truth effectual. If it has done you any good, that good comes from God alone, without whose aid neither you nor any other person can learn aright. And although in this sort of gratitude, we do not look upon men as the actual authors of the blessings we receive by their means, yet they are too apt to rival God in our esteem, especially if our souls be not thoroughly purified from those carnal tendencies which tempt us to consider the channels of good as its source.

“ Not that we are to be ungrateful or forgetful of those who have instructed us, when duly authorised, as priests, bishops, and confessors are. They are teachers, and other men are their disciples. But it is very different in our case ; and as the angel refused to be worshipped by one who was his fellow-servant, so we must beg you not to pay us such com-

pliments again, nor to use the expressions of human gratitude, since we are but learners like yourself.

“ And, in the second place, why do you say that it is needless to repeat these things, because we already know them well ? We are afraid that you do not make a sufficient distinction between the things of which you speak, which are holy, and those of every-day life. Doubtless, when the latter are once fixed in the memory, they need no repetition, but it is not so with divine things. To have comprehended these once, though in a right way, I mean by the help of God’s Spirit, is not enough to make us retain the knowledge of such truths, even if we perfectly remember them. It is as easy to learn an epistle of St Paul by heart, and to retain it in the memory, as a book of Virgil ; but the knowledge thus acquired, and thus preserved, is but an effort of memory. In order that we may penetrate its hidden meaning, the same grace which first made truth clear to us, must continue to preserve it in our hearts, by daily writing it anew on those fleshly tablets : just as God perpetually renews the happiness of glorified saints, which is at once the work and the result of grace,—and as the Church holds that the Father continually produces the Son, and maintains the eternity of his being by an effusion of his own substance, without interruption and without end.

“ Thus, the perseverance of the saints is neither more nor less than God’s grace, perpetually imparted, and not given once for all in a mass that is to last for ever, which teaches us how completely we are dependent on God’s mercy ; for if he should for a moment withhold the sap of his grace, we must of necessity wither away. Therefore, it is plain that we are bound always to make new efforts to gain a newness of heart, because we can only retain the grace we already possess by acquiring new grace. Otherwise, we should lose that grace which we hoped was our own, just as those who would shut

in light, find themselves shut up in darkness. And we ought to strive daily to purify the soul, which is daily soiled with fresh spots before the old ones are effaced, and cannot, unless by assiduous cleansing, be made meet to receive that new wine which must not be put into old bottles.

“Fear not, therefore, to remind us of things we already know. They need to sink deeper into our hearts, and your discourse will be more likely to fix them there, than if the idea remained undisturbed in our memories. And, besides, divine grace is vouchsafed in answer to prayer, and your love for us is one of those prayers which go up without ceasing. For the same reason, we should never decline to hear or read of holy things, no matter how common or familiar they may be, since our memory, like the teachings it retains, is but a lifeless, formal body without God’s vivifying Spirit. And it often happens that God makes use of these outward methods to make us comprehend his own truths, and thereby gives less scope to human vanity. A book or sermon of the most ordinary kind may produce more effect on any one who studies them attentively, than the most elaborate discourses, which often please more than they profit. We sometimes see that persons listening to the truth in a right spirit, though ignorant and even stupid, are affected by the simple mention of God and the threat of eternal punishment, which is all they understand, and which they knew very well before.

“In the third place, you say that you only write on religious subjects, to let us know that you share our feelings, and for this we both praise and thank you. We honour your perseverance, and thank you for having thus proved it. We had already learned as much from M. Perier, and being sure, from what he told us, of the state of your mind, we can only express our gladness by asking you to imagine what

your own joy would be if you were to hear the same good news of us.

“ We have nothing special to say to you, unless about the plan of your house.* We know that M. Perier is too earnest in what he undertakes, to be able to give full attention to two things at once ; and the whole plan is so extensive, that if he carry it out, it must engross his thoughts for a very long time. True, he only expects to rear a part of the edifice, but that, besides being large in itself, pledges him to finish the remainder, in spite of every resolution, as soon as the present obstacles are removed ; especially if he spends the time in building which he ought to employ in overcoming its fascinations. So we have advised him to build on a more moderate scale, and only that which is absolutely necessary ; but to proceed on the same plan already agreed on, so that he may neither be obliged to complete it now, nor yet deprive himself of the power of so doing hereafter. We beg you to think seriously of this, and to make up your mind to second our advice, lest he should be more prudent, and take more care and pains in the erection of a house which he is not obliged to rear, than in the building of that mystic tower, whereof you know St Augustine speaks in one of his letters, which he is solemnly pledged to finish. Adieu. B. P.—J. P.”

Postscript by Jacqueline :—

“ I hope to write soon about my own concerns, and give you full particulars ; meantime, pray to God for my success. If you are acquainted with any pious people, ask them to pray for me too.”

The last line is written in Blaise Pascal’s hand.

“ My father,” continues Mad. Perier, “ was well persuaded that she had chosen the better part, and parental tenderness

* This refers to the country-house which M. Perier was then building, and which still stands at Bienassis, near the gates of Clermont.

alone made him oppose her project. Finding, therefore, that each day only strengthened her resolve, he told her that he saw plainly the world had no interest for her, that he fully approved her design, and would promise never to listen to any proposals for her settlement in marriage, however advantageous ; but he begged of her not to leave him, that his life would not be very long, and that, if she would only be patient till its close, he would allow her to live as she chose at home. She thanked him, but made no positive answer to his entreaty that she would not leave him, promising, however, that he should never have any reason to complain of her disobedience. This was about May 1649, and at that time my father resolved to visit Auvergne, together with my brother and sister. She greatly dreaded this journey, because of the influx of relatives and company to which one is exposed in a little country town, and accordingly wrote me that, in order to avoid this probable embarrassment, she thought I had better publicly announce her resolution to take the veil, and that her profession was only deferred out of respect for my father's wishes. I did not fail to fulfil my commission, and it succeeded so well, that on her arrival no one was surprised to see her dressed like an old woman, with great modesty ; nor that, after having returned the first calls of civility, she shut herself up, not merely in the house but in her room, which she only left to go to church, or to take her meals, and into which none ever intruded. So that, even in my own case, if I had anything to tell her, I used to make a little memorandum, or some kind of mark, that I might remember it when she came to table, or on our way to church, whither we always went together. This was my best opportunity of speaking to her, though very short, as we had not far to go. Not that she forbade me or any one else to enter her room, nor that she refused to listen, but we saw that whenever her thoughts

were called off in order to talk on subjects not absolutely necessary, it evidently tired and wearied her so much, that we tried to avoid giving her the annoyance.

“ There was then at Clermont a Father of the Oratory* whose life was exemplary. The good man often came to see my sister, and his edifying conversation gave her pleasure. He one day said to her, that since her talents had been formerly employed on worldly themes, it was but reasonable that she should now use them in some attempt at honouring God ; that he had heard of her as writing poetry, and had thought of furnishing her with an opportunity of thus glorifying God, by translating for her some of the Church hymns from Latin into French prose, which she might afterwards versify. She replied most promptly, that she was quite willing. He brought her first the Ascension hymn *Jesu Nostra Redemptio*, which is chanted every day at the Oratory, and she put it into rhyme.

“ Her poem has been translated as follows :—

“ Jesus, great Ransom of a world redeem'd,
Our hearts' Beloved, and our souls' Desire !
Thy mighty Godhead in creation beam'd,
Yet, woman-born, thou didst as man expire.

“ What wealth of mercy to a rebel race
Made thee so horrible a death endure,
That bearing thus their sins, thy boundless grace
Might from eternal death thine own secure !

“ To the far depths of hell thy splendour shone,
And roused thy captives from their long despair ;
Then, glorious Victor ! to thy Father's throne
Thou didst ascend, to reign for ever there !

* A religious order founded in Italy by St Philip Neri, the intimate friend of St Charles Borromeo, bound by no vows, but devoting its members to the task of reading the Scriptures, praying with the poor, founding and visiting hospitals for the sick. They took the name of Oratorians from the little chapel or oratory in which they used to assemble round St Philip to receive his instructions. The order was introduced into France in 1631.

" Oh let the same rich goodness bind thee still
To bid the sorrows of thy people cease !
Pardon thou all their guilt, their prayers fulfil,
And let them view thy face in heavenly peace.

" Be thou our only joy, O Christ our King !
For thou wilt ever be our sole reward ;
And ceaseless anthems to thy praise shall ring,
In the bright day of thine appearing, Lord !

" The good father thought it so fine, that he urged her to proceed, but her scruples were aroused by the reflection that she had undertaken the work without due consultation, and she wrote to the *Mère Agnes*, who sent her a beautiful letter in reply, in which, with other things, she said :—

" ' I have obtained Mons. Singlin's opinion on the questions you ask. To the first (which seems to have been an inquiry into the propriety of some employment) he says that nuns must not work for vanity, and it would be better for you to work on it a little at a time, by way of occupation. As to the second, it is better for you to hide your talents of that nature, instead of making them known. God will not require an account of them, and they must be buried, for the lot of woman is humility and silence.' Again, ' I am very glad that you have yourself anticipated this decision. You ought to hate your genius, and all the other traits in your character which perhaps cause the world to retain you; for where it has sown, it would fain gather the harvest. Our Saviour will do the same in his own good time. He will call for the fruit of that divine seed which he has set in your heart, and which, with patience, will become abundantly multiplied. This is all he now asks of us.'

" When Jaqueline received this letter, she shewed it to me, and, without giving any reason, begged the good father to excuse her from proceeding farther."

" This was probably her last poetic effort. Dr Reuchlin, however, ascribes to this period of her life the following lines,

which bear no date in the collection of Jacqueline's pieces. He calls it the Swan-song of the poetess, ere she laid the gift of song, as did Lemaître* that of eloquence, on the altar of her God, designing to glorify him by the sacrifice.

" The little poem has been thus translated :—

" O ye dark forests, in whose sombre shades
 Night finds a noonday lair,
 Silence, a sacred refuge ! to your glades
 A stranger worn with care,
 And weary of life's jostle, would repair.
 He asks no medicine for his fond heart's pain,
 He breaks your stillness with no piercing cry ;
 He comes not to complain,
 He only comes to die !

" To die among the busy haunts of men
 Were to betray his woe,
 But these thick woods and this sequester'd glen
 No trace of suffering shew.
 Here would he die that none his love may know.
 Ye need not dread his weeping—tears are vain—
 Here let him perish, and unheeded lie ;
 He comes not to complain,
 He only comes to die."

Madame Perier continues : " She then returned to her ordinary employments, and to her strict solitude, which she never quitted unless necessity obliged her. But she was not idle, for, after regularly reciting her offices,† and after reading, which employed her closely, as she made extracts from the books she read, she spent the rest of her time in working for the poor. She made them thick woollen stockings, under-linen, and other small comforts, which, when finished, she carried herself to the hospital. It was occasion of wonder and edification that this entire separation from the world

* Lemaître was a French pleader, brother of De Saci, nephew of Mère Angélique, and celebrated for his eloquence. He became one of the Port Royalist converts, and after a brilliant farewell speech, quitted the bar for ever. So thorough was the self-mortification demanded by his confessor, that he was not even allowed to correct a new edition of his former speeches.

† The daily stint of reading in a book of devotion.

did not make her sour in manners and temper, but, on the contrary, she was always charmingly affable, and ever ready to go out of doors on any charitable errand, as we many times on trial found. During this time I was often indisposed, and she would sit with me all day, without seeming in the least disconcerted. Several of my children had violent illnesses, and she nursed them with admirable kindness. Even when one of my little girls died of confluent small-pox, my sister attended her to the last ; and though the illness continued a fortnight, she only went into her own room to repeat her offices, choosing for that purpose the child's intervals of ease, watching over her night and day with the tenderest care, and passing many nights without once lying down. When there was no more need of her charitable services in this case, she returned to her usual course in her chamber. Jaqueline took great pleasure in occasional visits to poor sick people about the town, accompanying an excellent young lady who devoted herself entirely to the poor. And to all this she added great bodily austerities. As we had but scanty lodging room, a partition needed to be put up for her accommodation in a place where there was no chimney, at some distance from the other rooms. There she passed a whole winter, without allowing us to do the least thing for her comfort, nor would she be persuaded to come near the fire at meal-times, which made us all very uneasy. Her abstinence also troubled us, for though she partook of our ordinary food, yet it was in such small portions, that, being naturally very delicate, she lessened her strength and ruined her digestion, till, when at last we insisted on her taking more nourishment, she was unable. Her vigils, too, were extraordinary ; not that we knew their exact length, except as we perceived by the number of candles she burned, and by similar circumstances. Her admirable foresight made her prepare for a conventional dress,

which, differing as it does from the dress worn generally, troubles the body and so clogs the soul ; and to guard against this, she accustomed herself as much as possible to its inconveniences. Her shoes were made very low in the heel, she wore no corsets, cut off her hair, and put on head-dresses that were larger and more embarrassing than a veil would have been. These precautions were so effectual, that when she actually entered the convent, her costume was not the least annoyance to her. Thus she passed seventeen months in our house at Clermont.

“ After this, my father took her back to Paris, in November 1650. Jaqueline was comfortably lodged there, having her own private parlour and bedroom. My father allowed her all the liberty she could wish in her pious exercises, and she practised them punctually ; but her communication with Port Royal was still restricted, and she could only enjoy it by stealth. This did not prevent her from occasionally seeing and often hearing of her friends there. They regularly sent her notes every month, including those of the mysteries, with the reflections which they deduced from them. On Ascension Day 1651, the Mère Agnes sent her a note, as if she had been one of the nuns, on the mystery of our Lord’s death, and she meditated on it so carefully, that God inspired her with some admirable thoughts thereon, which she wrote down. Monsieur de Rebours* favoured me with a copy, but it was such a secret, that my sister never knew I had even seen them.

“ Not having been at Paris that year, I can give no special account of her mode of life, but I learnt from my brother that it was much the same as at Clermont.”

With regard to the *Reflections on the Death of Christ*,

* Anton de Rebours, one of St Cyran’s disciples, who, though preferring a life of entire solitude, had been induced by Singlin to enter the priesthood, and share with him the duties of confessor to the nuns and novices of Port Royal.

mentioned by Madame Perier, it may be added, that it was customary at Port Royal to decide by lot, every month, on a motto, or subject of meditation, for each member of the sisterhood. The Mère Agnes, who treated Jaqueline with the same affection as if she had really taken the veil, wrote her on the 20th of May 1651, as follows:—

“ I have drawn for you the mystery of Jesus Christ’s death, and the same subject has also fallen to my own lot. I have thereby been led to think that this holy mystery unites in itself all other precedent mysteries, since they were all to terminate in that wonderful death which alone could effect the salvation of the world. And, in like manner, none of those holy desires, emotions, and actions, which God inspires within us, can reach their full perfection, nor aid us in the attainment of holiness, until our self-will is entirely dead, and happily swallowed up in God’s will. When this is done, we cannot fail of experiencing that resurrection which gives eternal life to a soul that has renounced the principle of spiritual death, namely, self-will. Let us therefore try, my dear sister, to realise that it is the privilege of our heavenly calling to die daily, and let us not shrink from crucifying our own inclinations many times a day, if we may thereby honour Him whose death has procured for us eternal life.”

Jaqueline’s reflections on this subject, though not equal in point of style to her brother’s writings, display much vigour of thought, and it was at one time proposed to publish them in connexion with Pascal’s celebrated posthumous work. They were afterwards issued at the close of the “*Conferences of the Venerable Mother Marie Angélique Arnauld.*” Brussels, 1757.

CHAPTER V.

The Habit.

"In September 1651," says Madame Perier, "my father was seized with the illness of which he died, and my sister devoted herself to attendance upon him by day and night, with the utmost zeal and assiduity. She may be said to have done nothing else, for, when her presence was not needed in his room, she withdrew to her own apartment, where, as she herself told me, prostrating herself, she prayed for him incessantly with tears. But God, notwithstanding, did according to his own will, and my father died September 24. We were at once informed of it (being then at Clermont), but my state of health prevented us from reaching Paris before the last of November."

Jaqueline announced the calamity to Madame Perier, and gave the details of their father's illness, and Blaise soon afterwards wrote a consolatory letter in her name and his own, to their relatives at Clermont. The whole epistle is very beautiful, but too long for insertion here. A few of the more striking passages have therefore been selected for translation:—

"In our trials, we are not to look for consolation in ourselves, in man, or in any created thing, but in God. And the reason of this is, that creatures are not the primary cause of those events which we call sorrows; therefore, since God's

providence is the sole cause, arbiter, and sovereign of all that befalls us, we ought unquestionably to trace back every occurrence to its source and origin in God's will, in order to consider it rightly. Following this rule, we should regard this event [his father's death] not as the effect of chance, not as a fatal necessity of nature, which makes man the football of the elements, or the victim of his own internal structure (for God has not abandoned his elect to caprice or chance), but we should look upon the death that has occurred as an indispensable, inevitable, wise, and righteous consequence of the decrees of God's providence, for the welfare of the Church and the glory of his own great name, which was destined, before the world was, to take place in the fulness of time, in the very year, the very day, the very hour, the very place and manner, foreseen and foreordained of God from all eternity. If, therefore, the power of grace enables us to consider this event, not in itself, and apart from God, but in its proper position as one of the mysteries of the divine will—that will which is always righteous in its decrees, and orderly in its arrangements—we shall look upon God as the true cause of our bereavement, since without his will it could not have happened, and his will prescribed the exact time and mode in which it did happen; we shall adore in humble silence the impenetrable grandeur of his counsels; we shall reverence the justice of his decrees; we shall bless the arrangements of his providence; and, blending our will with God's will, we shall desire, with him, in him, and for him, the things which he has ordained in us and for us from all eternity.

“ Let us view death in the light of those truths taught us by the Holy Ghost. We shall thus gain the infinite advantage of knowing that death is the penalty of sin, inflicted upon man originally as the punishment of sin, and now necessary to deliver him from its power. Death alone can

the God's people entirely free from the corrupt and carnal nature with which they came into the world. We know also that his—the life of a believer—ought to be a continual burnt-offering. For before whom a sinner, conscious himself as a sacrifice has offered up himself to the Father a sinner there will be nothing visible. He will, his life is meant to be resurrection and because his presence will be perfect and the continual presence of the God's spirit shall constitute one heart and complete sacrifice. Now, why happened to Jesus as Head of the Church make necessary the partaking of itself as members. We are consequently to live upon our lives as a sacrifice and the accidents of life—will in affect the nature of Christians only by the degree in which they interrupt or accomplish that sacrifice.

"Let us then live daily in Jesus Christ and not without him. Without Christ death is naturally an object of detestation and dread. In Christ all is changed, and death becomes death now—the object of the believer's desire only. In Christ all things are pleasure, and work together for good. Death is an exception, for Christ suffered and died that in man's sanctified death and sorrow. As it has been he experienced the two extremes of misery and happiness but in so doing he sanctified everything and set us an example for us in every condition.

"Therefore let us not mourn as do the heathen who are without hope; nor us not obey the suggestions of nature but the teachings of scripture. Not looking upon our bodies as a man who has ceased to live, but as one who has just begun to live; for the soul has not perished—it is not annihilated—it lives and is united to the source of Life. Let the contemplation of this truth correct the erroneous feelings and the emotions of horror at the thought of death, which are so deeply rooted in the nature of man.

"Not that we are to feel no regret. The blow is so

painful. Without supernatural aid, it would be insupportable. It is not right for us to be without grief, even as the angels who are unconscious of sorrow ; neither ought we to refuse comfort, as do the heathen in their ignorance of grace. But it is our duty to grieve and to receive consolation in a Christian spirit, to let the comforts of grace overcome our natural sorrow, and to say with the apostle, ' Being afflicted, we give thanks.' Thus grace will not only be in our hearts, but it will rule them, thus hallowing our Father's name. His will shall be done in us, his grace will reign over us, and our very afflictions will become a sacrifice which the flame of his divine love shall kindle, consume, and destroy for his own glory. Thus, too, even our imperfections will form a part of this holocaust ; for sincere Christians endeavour to derive benefit from their past offences, because it is promised that all things shall work together for good to the elect according to God's purpose.

" A holy man once told me that one of the most advantageous ways of shewing our love for departed friends, is to do as they would advise us were they still living, to follow their holy counsels, and to endeavour to attain that state of holiness in which they would delight to see us. We thus cause them, as it were, to revive in us, by obeying their wishes, and doing as they would have done in our place. Let us do this for our beloved father, striving, as in God's sight, to fill his place as far as we can, and let us take comfort in that union of hearts in which I feel as if he were still alive and with us ; so that, when we meet, his presence may appear to be in some degree restored to us, even as Jesus Christ is ever present in the assemblies and hearts of his people.

" May God awaken and maintain these feelings in us all, and continue in my heart that affection for you and my sister, which seems to me greater at this moment than it ever was before ! I feel as if the love we used to lavish on my

father ought not to be lost, but to be gathered up and concentrated on each other. The legacy of love he left us should be invested in a deeper fraternal devotion, if that were possible. His loss is greater to me than to the others. Had I lost him six years ago, I had been ruined ; and though my need of him is not quite so absolute at the present time, it seems as if he were necessary to me for the next ten years, and his presence would have been useful through my whole life. But we are bound to hope that, since God has seen fit to take him away in the present time and manner, the removal will prove in the end expedient for our salvation and his own glory. Strange as it may seem, I believe that we ought to look upon every event, no matter how dark or distressing, in this way, and to feel that God will make it an occasion of joy, if we commit it unto him. Let us then place our souls and all our concerns in his keeping, and not suffer ourselves to be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow."

The strong affection which Blaise here expresses for his sisters, made the idea of parting with Jaqueline exceedingly distasteful to him. Mad. Perier says : " My brother was much comforted in his deep affliction by her society, and he imagined that kindness would induce her to stay with him at least a year, and help him in recovering from this great calamity. He spoke of it to her in a way which plainly shewed he felt sure that she would not dare to refuse him, for fear of enhancing his grief : she was therefore obliged to conceal her intentions until we arrived. She then told me that she meant to take the veil as soon as the estate was divided, and that she should spare my brother's feelings by letting him think she was only going to make a retreat at Port Royal. She made all her arrangements for this in my presence. The division of property was signed on the last day of December, and she fixed the 4th of January for her departure."

It does not appear that Etienne Pascal left a very large fortune. His resolute probity had prevented him from amassing wealth by unfair means during his administration of affairs at Rouen ; and we learn from Jaqueline herself that she felt it her duty to transfer a considerable part of her own share of the property to her brother.

Mad. Perier thus describes her sister's departure :—“ The evening before, she begged me to mention it to my brother, in order that he might be prepared. I did so with all the precaution I could, but though I told him she was only going to try for a little while how that manner of living would suit her, yet he felt very much hurt, and mournfully shut himself up in his own room, without seeing my sister, who was then in a little ante-room, where she used to say her prayers. She did not leave it till he was gone, fearing that the sight of her would give him pain. I told her the loving words he had said, and then we all retired for the night. But though I heartily approved of her proceedings, because I believed that nothing could be a greater blessing to her, yet her wonderful resolution so astonished me and engrossed my thoughts that I could not sleep.

“ About seven, finding that she did not get up, I was afraid she had not slept any more than I, and might feel ill. So I went to her bed, where she lay sound asleep. The noise I made awaked her, and she asked what o'clock it was. I told her, and inquired how she felt, and if she had slept : she answered that she was well, and had slept well. She rose, dressed, and went away ; doing this, as she did everything, with inconceivable calmness and evenness of spirit. We did not say good-bye, for fear of being overcome, and I turned aside from her path when I saw that she was ready to depart. In this manner she bade the world farewell, January 4, 1652, being then twenty-six years and three months old.”

Here ends Madame Perier's sketch of her sister's life. The

JACQUELINE PASCAL.

..... of this develops her own unselfishness, and Jacqueline's heroism and the strength of Pascal's character.

..... the walls of Port Royal, Jacqueline was eagerly awaiting her fate by the assumption of the veil, but a great reluctance to this step obliged her to write..... as once resolute and tender, wherein, while recognising that she does not *need* his approbation, she..... explores it, and invites him to be present at the..... M. Cousin thus characterises it: "It is the..... of a woman and a saint; it minglesthe passion..... which belonged to the whole family with a..... gentleness, and expresses them in accents of alter..... command and meek entreaty." A few extracts will give..... idea of its tone:—

"*PORT ROYAL DU SAINT SACREMENT,*
" *March 7, 1652.*

"*MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—*—I can give no stronger proof of my wish that you may receive the intelligence I have to communicate with joy and calmness of soul, and a ready acknowledgment of God's goodness, than by selecting M. Hobier as my messenger. For although I am now free, and find whose chastonings are favours, and who chastens those he loves, has chosen to remove the only legitimate obstacle* to the route I desire to take, in the manner you are aware of, and I dare not name, lest a degree of sadness should mingle with my joy; yet I earnestly wish for your consent and approval, and I now, with the deepest affection, request them. Not that they are necessary for the accomplishment of my design, but, if you should withhold them, I could not fulfil it in peace and gladness, nor with a tranquil soul. that, indeed, by your means, first awakened in my soul the

* Alluding to the death of her father.

stirrings of his grace, but you know very well that he alone is the author of our love and delight in what is good. You have, therefore, the power of troubling my peace, but you cannot restore it, if, through your fault, I should once lose it. And you ought in some measure to judge of my affection by your own, and to consider that if I am strong enough to persevere, despite your resistance, I may not have strength to bear up against the grief it will occasion me. I know that nature uses all kinds of weapons in such conflicts, and that every means of escaping what she dreads seems allowable. Her suggestions, too, will be fomented by your worldly acquaintances. Human praise is one of our great Adversary's most effectual methods of weakening the power of religion in the soul. When he sees that violence cannot rend it away, he tries to wile it from us by the world's caresses. He formerly inspired persecutors with the idea of thus shaking the faith and constancy of martyrs, and even now suggests it to the best friends of Christ's Church, in the hope of overcoming the constancy of the faithful. Resist this temptation boldly, if it should attack you, and if the world shews some regret at seeing me no more, be you very sure that this regret is an illusion, for the world cannot really love one who is not of it, who never will be, and whose chief desire is to destroy all its hold on her by a solemn vow. The attractions and promises of earth are so vain and narrow, that if we do but exercise a little reason, enlightened by faith and sustained by grace, we shall find no difficulty in relinquishing beforehand the things which in a few brief moments must be wrested from our grasp. The thought of God's infinite love, which passeth understanding, as shewn to a creature so unworthy, so overwhelms me, even while I write, that if I dared, I believe I should here confess the sins of my whole life, in order that we might both better comprehend the

exceeding riches of his mercy. But this is needless, if you will only tax your memory to recall the time when I loved the world, and when my very knowledge and love of God increased my guilt, because my heart was so unequally divided between two masters. I blush to remember how often you tried in vain to convince me that I could not unite two things so opposed as is the spirit of religion to that of the world. And oh ! what unceasing gratitude do we not owe to God for having dispelled this dangerous blindness ! Do from a good motive that which you must do. Give up to God that which he is taking from you, for he loves to have us cheerfully bestow on him that which it is his will to deprive us of I have written to my sister, and now ask you to encourage and console her if necessary. I tell her that, if she wishes it, and thinks it is in my power to fortify her mind, it will delight me to see her, but that if she comes in the hope of changing my resolution, her pains will be thrown away. I say the same to you. . . . My invitation to the ceremony is of course a mere form, for I do not imagine you would dream of staying away. If you did, you well know that I should give you up for ever. Now, do with a good grace that which you will be forced to do ; I mean, do it in a spirit of kindness, and do not make me unhappy, for I cannot see that I have ever given you cause. Farewell, my very dear brother."

Extract of a letter from Jacqueline Pascal to Madame Perier :—

" PORT ROYAL DU SAINT SACREMENT,
" May 10, 1652.

" There is nothing but sorrow everywhere, yet I am full of joy, for the day when I am to take the veil is fixed for the Feast of Trinity, by God's help, which I hope to have. . . . After so much opposition, it seems like a dream to find myself so near it. I shall fear that it is only an illusion, till

the ceremony is really over. But I will not waste time in expatiating on my happiness, for you cannot doubt it. Enough that the steadfastness of my determination proves that I have not mistaken my calling, and that I can say with David, ‘As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our God.’

“ I sent the news to my brother by M. Hobier, on Ascension Day. He came next morning, nearly wild with the terrible headache it had given him, yet very much softened ; for, instead of the two years’ delay he had asked the last time I saw him, he only wanted me to wait until All Saints’ Day ; but seeing me determined not to put it off, and yet complaisant enough to allow him a short time to get reconciled to the project, he gave up entirely, and even pitied me for having again to defer a thing which I had set my heart upon so long. Still he did not give his consent at once ; but M. d’Andilly,* by my request, was kind enough to send for him on Saturday, and to argue with him so skilfully and cordially, that he agreed to everything we wished, and we came to this conclusion. He begged me, if possible, to put it off for a considerable time, but if I would not do this, he was just as willing to have the ceremony take place on the first of Trinity, as a fortnight later. Therefore, that is to be the day, unless hindrances should arise from a quarter with which we have nothing to do.”

Pascal’s strong unwillingness to part with his sister, made him eagerly seize every pretext for delay, and to this motive must be ascribed that opposition to her plans which he now offered. Not wishing to be a burden on the convent of Port Royal, which was far from rich, she desired to bring with her a dowry, and thought that her share of her father’s property

* A brother of the Abbesses Angélique and Agnes, M. Arnauld d’Andilly. The younger brothers in a French family often take the name of some estate belonging to the family, to distinguish them from the elder brother, who takes simply the family name.

ought to furnish it. To this her family at first objected, and the high-spirited Jaqueline resented their non-compliance most keenly. The influence of those false views of life and duty, the result of her education in an apostate Church, which led her to break off from all her associates, to bury every talent she had received, and to forsake the kindred dear as her own soul, made her unable to sympathise with their sorrow at losing her, or to brook their efforts to hold her back. Her sufferings from wounded affection were therefore severe, though perhaps in some degree unreasonable, especially as her brother yielded to her wishes respecting the property, on finding that her being portionless would not prevent her from taking the veil. Jaqueline afterwards explained the details of this affair in a narrative written for the purpose of making known the disinterestedness of Port Royal, and addressed to the Frioress. Its great length prevents the transfer of more than a few paragraphs to these pages. She says, after having excused herself for writing at all :—

..... “ My resolution, which they thought so unkind, gave my friends a fine chance of moralising over the instability of human affection. Had they stopped there, all would have been well, and their minds might have been occupied without disturbing mine ; but there they did not stop. Each wrote to me in the same style, not saying that they felt aggrieved, but treating me as if they did, and responding to my propositions by an exact statement of my affairs, whereby it appeared that the nature of my property must prevent me from disposing of it under any circumstances, or in favour of any person whatever ; partly because of an agreement made at its division, that all claims upon the estate should be settled from the property as a whole, and partly from other disingenuous reasons, which, had my friends been less irritated, they would doubtless never have named. Not that these reasons were actually untrue, but they were such as we had never been

accustomed to use with one another. Just think, my dear mother, how these letters made me feel ! written in a style so changed, and imposing on me, besides, the positive necessity of either deferring my profession as a nun some four years longer, in order to obtain the release of my property from the liens that held it in security for the remainder of the estate, and perhaps, after all, not being able to free it entirely ; or, on the other hand, having to endure the mortification of being received into the convent gratuitously, and remaining a burden upon it. My grief became so violent, that it seems wonderful I ever lived through it. Mother Agnes sent for me as soon as she heard that I was in sorrow ; and, discovering that what afflicted me most was the apparent necessity of either giving up the cherished hope of many years, or of effecting it in a manner so painful to me, she tried to console me by saying that things eternal ought alone to awaken emotion ; that temporal misfortunes are never irreparable, and do not deserve our tears, which should be reserved for the only true evil—sin ; but require us, when they come, instead of wasting our time in sorrow, to set about devising the readiest means of relief,—adding, with her usual kindness, that my troubles would be soon and easily ended, if her advice were followed, for, leaving all my worldly affairs as they were, my sole care would then be, to begin my cloistered life with a calm spirit.

“ ‘ We may not always be able,’ said she, ‘ to obtain the privilege of being poor ; but we are always safe in wishing for and delighting in it, and in rejoicing over every event that tends to impoverish us. When we are in prosperity, we should tremble and mourn over it as a snare and a hindrance to piety and lowliness of heart ; and we ought not only to rejoice when the wealth to which we are entitled is kept from us, but also when that which we did possess is snatched away, since we are thus relieved from its responsibility.’

“ In fact, dear mother, her various arguments almost compelled me to rejoice over my affliction. Could I but have maintained that indifference, I should have become what she wished to see me. But I was too weak and sorrowful to be capable of such fortitude, and I acknowledge with shame that I soon relapsed into my former despondency.

“ She afterwards directed me to inform M. Singlin of the whole affair, while she herself took the trouble of going to relate it to our Mother.* Coming immediately back, she brought me word that, in our Mother’s opinion, it was my duty to leave my relatives to manage my whole fortune as they would, and think only of my approaching profession.

“ At first M. Singlin did not entirely agree with her, for he feared that there might be too much generosity and too little humility in the advice. He forcibly said that, ‘ when we have overcome that insatiable avarice of wealth which is almost universal, we ought to beware of falling into the opposite extreme, and becoming greedy of praise, and ostentatious of our generosity, while we despise those who still cling to their property. For if our distinction consists in being above the love of money, as that of others does in its possession, we are likely, without great watchfulness, to perform actions seemingly benevolent, but in reality prompted by the same principle of pride which causes some men to contend too earnestly for their rights, and others to yield them too easily. In all cases of this nature, we ought to be neutral, and endeavour, unbiassed by personal interest, to ascertain what justice demands on both sides.’

“ However, upon reflection, he agreed with our Mother ; and, seeing how strenuously I opposed their decision, for I could not bear to let things go in that way, he told me that he knew my friends well, and was sure they were reasonable

* *Angélique*, who was then at Port Royal de Paris.

people. Therefore some misapprehension must undoubtedly have made them unreasonable upon this point, and it was to be hoped that, when we were able to meet and talk matters over, they would of themselves act rightly by all parties, and thus I need not disquiet myself. . . . There was nothing for me but submission to the course prescribed. . . . All I could do by way of lessening my mortification was to beg earnestly for admission as a lay-sister.* If my reception must be a gratuitous one, I thought that, out of gratitude to the sisterhood for the double favour of welcoming me without a dowry, I could do no less than serve them as a menial for the rest of my life. . . . But God, the Searcher of hearts, knew me to be unworthy of an office so honourable in his sight, and that my past and present pride needed a punishment instead of a reward. He therefore restrained M. Singlin from giving his consent. On examination, my strength appeared insufficient for the duties of a lay-sister, and as this would oblige me to take more rest than my companions, they might imagine I was indulged for other reasons ; and since respect of persons is always hateful, and contrary to the spirit of love, which forbids distinctions to be made among sisters, my petition was absolutely refused, and I had to leave everything just as our Mother had arranged it.

“ By order of M. Singlin, I wrote immediately to my friends, stating my decision in words which he chose to dictate, lest my own should be too warm. He made me use

* The lay-sisters were eighteen in number, ten being employed in the convent of Paris, eight in that of Des Champs. They had no vote, were selected for their bodily strength, and employed in hard work, such as cooking, baking, washing, taking care of cows and poultry, &c., but not in the service of the sick or infirm, lest they should be treated as inferiors, unless in case of emergency. They were not required either to pray so often or fast so much as did the other nuns. The maxim, “ *Laborare est Orare*” (Work is prayer), was often repeated to them. They wore a gray dress and scapulary, and a white veil.

great discretion in my account of the charity which was willing to receive me as a professed nun, without any demur on the ground that my affairs needed supervision, and would allow no expressions which might seem like a bravado or a device to pique their sense of honour.

“ This letter could not be short, and it kept me busy till evening, so that I did not see our mother (Angélique). But on the next day, as was her custom after her returning from Port Royal de Paris, she sent for all the novices, and being there, when my turn came to salute her I could not help saying that I was the only sorrowful one among all the sisters who were delighted at her return. ‘ What ! ’ said she, ‘ is it possible, my daughter, that you are still sad ? Were you not prepared for all you see ? Did you not long since learn that we should never lean on the friendship of creatures, and that the world only loves its own ? And is it not a happy thing that God makes this truth plain to you in the persons of those from whom you had least reason to expect such a lesson, and thus removes all doubt of it from your mind ? Your previous resolutions are thus braced by a sort of inevitable necessity, and you may, in a certain sense, say that you are alone in the world.’ I answered, weeping, that I seemed to myself already so detached from it, as not to need such an experience. ‘ God is shewing you,’ said she, ‘ that in this thought you are mistaken. If it were so, you would look upon all that has occurred with indifference, and be very far from grieving as you now do. You ought, therefore, to feel that God is granting you a great favour, and to make good use of it.’ She also talked to me for some time on the emptiness of all human affection, keeping her arm round me with much tenderness, until I had to leave her and let others approach.

“ Having noticed on the morrow that my looks were unusually sad, she left the choir before mass began, and

sending for me, did her best to give me comfort. Not content with this brief effort of kindness, as soon as mass was over she signed to me to follow her, and then supported my head on her bosom for a whole hour, caressing me the while with all a mother's tenderness. I can truly say that she omitted nothing in her power that could charm away my distress. Would to God, dear mother, my mind had been clear and retentive enough to have preserved the precious cordials distilled by her in the hope of sweetening my heart's bitterness! Then were my affliction indeed a gain, and I might now give you a rich treat. Since all is not lost, I desire to preserve the little I do remember, by imparting it to you in this letter, as a relic, none the less precious though it be but a fragment rescued from the great whole.

“ She at first said to me with a gentle severity, ‘ I cannot wonder enough, my daughter, to see you so overcome by a trifle. You so astonished me yesterday by saying you were sad, that I did not know how to answer you ; for I supposed, of course, that you had already forgotten the past, because, things being settled as they are, you have nothing further to do. I assure you that at first I could not tell what you meant, and it took me some little time to guess, and to recall the whole affair to my mind.’

“ My dejection was not deep enough to keep me from secretly admiring her power to forget so soon. But I, who was very far from possessing her rare virtue, could only answer her with tears ; perceiving which, she anticipated the excuse I might have made, by saying, ‘ Why do you weep over this thing? Or else why do you not weep as much over every sin that is committed? If you are thinking only of God’s glory and the spiritual welfare of your relations, why have you never shed as many tears over their graver faults and their more heinous guilt in the sight of God, as you now do over a slight failure in the kindness due to yourself?’

" I told her, what I believed was true, that it was the injustice done to the establishment that troubled me, and that personally I was neither hurt nor angry, but simply indifferent. ' You are mistaken, my daughter,' said she, ' nothing is more painful or hard to bear than wounded affection. I know that you feel deeply the injustice done to the House, but your own share in this gives you a keener pang, for self-love mingles in everything we do, and is the main-spring of this mighty sorrow.'

" She was then so good as to give me the details of several such histories, without mentioning names. I suppose this was done as much for the sake of affording me that species of comfort derivable from companionship in misery, as to convince me that we never take the interests of justice equally to heart when the injustice committed does not concern us, as when it does. On my admitting the truth of this, she continued : ' This occurrence has been a source of real and not unfounded joy to me ; and were the value of the property twice as much, I would not but have had the trial come upon you before your taking the veil, because, while a probationer, you have not been sufficiently tried. You see, my sister, that it was an easy thing for you to renounce the world, God having enabled you to perceive how vain and trifling are the amusements and gaieties of life, which please and fascinate other girls—not that you were better than they, but that God had given you greater grace. And certainly you were very much detached from earth, but there yet remained two things for you to relinquish, of which you had not thought. One was your fortune, small indeed in a worldly point of view, but ample for a nun, whose expenses are next to nothing. The other, and the chief treasure of your family, was the close union and confidence which made all your interests one, and on this you were unconsciously reposing. God sees fit to strip you of both, and to make you poor in

every sense of the word, poorer even in friendship than in possessions, for these you were prepared to renounce.

“ ‘You see, my sister,’ she went on, ‘that whatever is done to gratify a recluse seems thrown away. There is a short story in the lives of the Fathers which illustrates this. A man of the world once went to visit his brother, who, after having long lived the life of a saint, had retired into solitude. He was greatly astonished to find him eating at the hour of nones, because formerly he fasted until vespers. The anchorite, perceiving this, said to him : “ Marvel not, my brother ; this meal is a necessity, and not an indulgence. In the world I needed it not, for my ears fed me : the praises earned by my austerities made me so comfortable in mind, that my body was strengthened, and I could, if needful, have borne twice as much. But here—there is nobody to speak a word ; my self-love has nothing to feed upon ; and I am forced, in spite of myself, to satisfy the cravings of nature, since there is no other satisfaction to be had.”

“ ‘ Persons living in the world feel inclined to oblige one another, because they are rewarded by gratitude and praise ; but to render service to a recluse is quite another thing. Make up your mind, therefore, to retain no friends in the world after you have left it, and to expect no great proofs of personal regard.’

“ Among many instances that she related to me of cases like mine within her own knowledge, was one in which the relations of a young lady of rank, after she had taken the veil, failed, most unexpectedly to her, in fulfilling their promises touching her dowry, which ought to have been large, and this at a time when the convent was in great need. ‘ I assure you,’ said she, ‘ that this injustice surprised and grieved me much ; for I had looked upon the thing as certain, judging from the manner in which the parties had always acted towards us. However, the late M. de St Cyran

advised me to endure this hardship, for it really was one, so calmly and patiently as not even to mention the subject to the delinquents, nor to shew that I felt in the least hurt, but to behave as if I had forgotten it. And with a firm faith in Providence, he assured me that if I did so, God would in some other way provide for our wants, and make up the loss. God,' added she, 'helped me to believe this, and to follow his advice, which, indeed, I never felt at liberty to disregard ; and, as you see, I have since found the promise verified by perpetual experience. I therefore entreat you, my daughter, not to feel angry with your friends, not to manifest any resentment, or suffer this to alienate your affection from them. After all, for what are you contending ? Only a little lucre, absolutely less than nothing ! True, as we cannot live without money, it is difficult to dispense with it entirely ; but then it rarely happens that we are so destitute as to be in actual want, and luxuries we are forbidden to covet. When God sends us money in a legitimate way, we may receive it as a means of support ; but when he does not send it, and even when he allows us to be deprived of it, truly we ought to rejoice. M. de St Cyran used to say that, in this world, riches, like bodily humours, always settle in the weakest and most easily injured spot. I want you to remember this, because you are young, and may at some future day witness similar events to those now occurring in your own case ; and if you should ever be consulted in a like emergency, you will know what to advise, and can do as you have been done by. Therefore write to your friends once more,' she went on, 'especially to her whose tenderness for you is deepest ; express your own affection without reserve, and let them see that you have, in all sincerity, given up your fortune from the sole fear of paining them, without any after regret. And when he (meaning Pascal) who is shortly expected here, comes, speak to him in the same way ; do not

reproach him, nor even look as if aught were amiss, but appear to have forgotten all, which you really ought long ago to have done, and I supposed you had, so that it quite surprises me to find you disturbed by an affair so trivial.'

"She was then silent for a brief space; and I took occasion to say that one of my great vexations was a fear that the money formerly at my disposal had been misspent, owing to my not giving it away with sufficient discrimination, because at the time I expected to have enough for all claims, and now I felt self-convicted of having been too hasty, to say the least.

"'Do not fret about that,' said she, 'for if you had it to do over again, I do not think that you could in conscience give less under the circumstances than you have given. You know that in this matter* you regarded the will of God and the welfare of one dearer to you than the world's wealth, and that you did not give him the money in order to aggrandise him or to render his position more brilliant; for, with all that you have done for him, he has barely enough to keep up an appearance befitting his station. What ground, then, have you for fearing that your money was squandered? How could you do less? Even were it true,' proceeded she with admirable kindness, 'which, as I have told you, it is not, that you had been hasty and extravagant, and made a dead loss of your money, then your regret should be calmed by remembering that you could not possibly meet with a loss of less importance. For you see, my sister, every external and perishable advantage is in reality valueless; and the loss of the least particle of God's grace is of more consequence in his sight than the loss of all the world's wealth, use it as we may. God neither needs our possessions, nor cares for them. The grace he implants within us is the only true riches, and we

* This refers to the property which Jacqueline had previously transferred to her brother.

ought often to ask ourselves whether we are employing this for our own good and that of others. This, however, we seldom think of, grieving but little, or not at all, over a failure in our usual meekness, or gentleness, or any other Christian grace, and having all our scruples aroused if we have mis-spent a small sum of money, though this is the least talent of all those for which we must give account. But the favour of God and the graces of his Holy Spirit are treasures indeed, and, if we are careful not to lose or misimprove them, will be for ever serviceable to others as well as to ourselves.

“ Now forget all that is past, and speak and write as if nothing had occurred, merely telling your friends that you will confirm your resignation in their favour. And you must do this in all sincerity, avoiding the appearance either of a spirit of pride, as if you had been more generous than they, or of a wish to coax them into obliging you ; for if our actions do not arise from love, they are worthless. You must seek to be influenced by a wish for peace, especially with her* whom you know to be very sensitive, and likely to take the idea of your displeasure much to heart.”

The event proved the wisdom of this counsel. Pascal soon afterwards visited Port Royal, and, perceiving his sister's dejection, at once tried to remove it by offering to make arrangements for endowing the convent with the usual pension, assuming all the risks and charges of the estate himself, and releasing Jacqueline. This was of course a great relief to her feelings, and after describing the interview, she goes on to say :—

“ There was no time lost in trying to persuade him to increase the amount, for I was ordered so expressly, and with so absolute an authority, to make his will my law, that I no more dared to stir in the affair than as if it had not concerned

* Madame Perier.

me. It was an admirable thing to see the difference in the conduct of each, careful as they all were to act in conformity with God's will and the perfect law of love. Our Mother (Angélique) naturally caring for the interests of the convent, was anxious that no shade of meanness, avarice, or self-seeking, should be mingled with the affair. M. Singlin not only shared her zeal for the House, but felt compassionately for my relatives, some of whom are under his guidance, while all cherish for him the highest esteem. Mother Agnes, on the other hand, busied herself solely with the endeavour to have me, as a novice under her charge, profit by what was passing, and lose no opportunity of exercising the patience, humility, and forbearance so repugnant to human nature.

“ On the eve of my profession, for which the day had long been fixed, irrespective of the state of my affairs, the papers were all ready, and only waiting to be signed. I begged our Mother to go down for that purpose to the parlour, but, being quite indisposed, she was unable to go ; and, strange to say, this seemed to give her pleasure, ‘ because,’ said she, ‘ the ceremony of signing may now be deferred till after you have taken the veil, and then your brother need do nothing but of his own free-will, or from motives of pure charity.’ When I informed my brother of this, the men of business who accompanied him were excessively surprised, and declared that such conduct was very rare, &c. My brother, who had long known the ways of Port Royal, was less surprised, but he wished for no delay, and shewed that he gave the little he had to give, freely, by returning on the morrow, when our Mother, being in better health, could not excuse herself from seeing him. He told me afterwards that she had said to him with extraordinary emphasis, that she could not tell whether I had acted in this matter as she bade me. ‘ And lest she may not,’ continued our Mother, ‘ I feel bound to entreat you, sir, in God's name, not to let any earthly consideration

influence you, and if you do not feel that the spirit of charity prompts you to this deed of charity, to leave it undone. You see, sir, that M. de St Cyran taught us to accept nothing for the House of God which does not come from Him. Alms given from other motives are not the work of his Holy Spirit, and therefore we have no wish to receive them.' In reply, he said everything that was polite and proper, but would not agree to any delay, and thus the affair ended.

"After this, our Mother, on meeting me, said that all was settled, and I need not torment myself any longer. Then drawing me aside, she added very seriously, that it had really troubled her to see me so anxious to have my brother act liberally, and so annoyed when I fancied that he did not. 'I fear, my daughter,' she said, very kindly, 'that you have thereby offended God. I beg you to reflect on this, and also to consider that you have in fact no reason to complain of your brother, who has given largely, both in proportion to his means, and when compared with many others. I only wish you knew what an advantage is usually taken of a spirit of disinterestedness ; it is incredible ; but it ought not to make us neglect our own duty.'"

JaqueLINE closes her tale by entreating the Prioress to forgive the appearance of her letter, "full as it is of scratches, blots, omissions, and other blunders," occasioned by the interruptions to which, in her occupation of teaching the novices, she was subject,—in these terms :—

"I would gladly write it over again, out of respect to you ; but it is doubtful if I could ever find leisure, for I am never able to write above two dozen lines, and often not more than five or six, without being interrupted by some question, unimportant, it is true, but quite capable of disturbing such a weak brain as mine, and causing me to spoil whatever I have in hand. And I must tax your kindness still further by asking you to intercede before God, that the many sins

committed by me in this affair may be blotted out, especially my neglect of so much good advice, lest the privileges intended for my salvation should serve only to condemn me, and the consolations by which God has designed to dry my tears, should witness against my unfaithfulness."*

Margaret Perier says of her aunt:—"Although the customs of Port Royal required a year's probation before the veil could be taken, yet four months after her entrance she was allowed to become a novice." Thenceforward she bore the name of Jaqueline de Ste. Euphémie, and her world was bounded by the convent walls.

No details of the ceremony, which took place in May 1652, have been preserved, but it was probably conducted in strict accordance with the formula prescribed in the *Constitutions*, which allowed very few persons to be present when a novice took the veil, and forbade all attempts to excite public interest by the theatrical display common among Romanists on such occasions. It was desired that the dress of the candidates should be of inexpensive materials, and simply made. Pearls and other ornaments were prohibited, and instead of the usual entire severance of the novice's hair, the Abbess only cut off a little from the ends, in order that, if the former should afterwards repent of her consecration, and wish to quit the convent, she need not be deterred from re-entering society by a feeling of shame at the loss of that feminine adornment.

* Her postscript is both curious and characteristic: "I thought, dear mother, that there was no further apology to be made, but I forgot to mention that the gilt-edged paper I have used was found in a casket left me by a friend, and since it is the only reliqu of worldliness I possess, at least externally, I think it ought to be devoted to God's service, and that the best way of doing this is by using it to commemorate a charity of which he is the source. Although I can but dimly shadow forth the love of which I have been the recipient, I feel that it deserves to be recorded in letters of blood, rather than on gilt-edged sheets."

CHAPTER VI.

Pascal's Conversion.

In the course of the year 1653, Madame Perier had a dangerous illness, from which it was at one time supposed that she could not recover. In this distressing conjuncture the Sister Sainte Euphémie addressed a letter to her brother-in-law and his suffering wife, full of affection and sorrow, yet carrying her own devout resignation almost to the pitch of rejoicing over her sister's illness, and urging M. Perier to improve the occasion by completely consecrating himself to God. To do this, in her belief, implied the necessity of separating from his wife, if she lived, of giving up his secular employments, and becoming a recluse like herself. She says :—

“ July 31, 1653.

“ I write to you both, if God permit the letter to find you both* in a state to read it, which, after your note of the 24th, I scarcely dare to hope. You can imagine the state of my own feelings ; I do not pretend to express them, for it would be useless. But I think it my duty, in this extremity, to render all the assistance I can, both to my sister and yourself. I pray for you as often as possible, and our Mothers have frequently reminded the sisterhood to commend her

* Madame Perier was then very ill, and expecting the birth of her son, Blaise Perier.

case to God ; so that she may be very sure we do not forget her. In fact, they are only too kind to every one here, and especially to her. But I believe that the most efficacious manner of pleading, by which we may best deserve to have the prayers of our forefathers come up in remembrance before God, is to prove our own fidelity to her at this important juncture. I speak in the deepest grief and feeling as if there were no hope at all, though I have no doubt that the worst news would produce totally different emotions, should God see fit to consummate our affliction. This obliges me to say, that we cannot have a better opportunity of testing whether we possess real faith, for God appears to be requiring us to hope that in this solemn hour he will have mercy upon my sister, since he graciously inclined her heart to seek and serve him in her days of health. This thought alone can sweeten the bitter cup, for we must neither expect nor desire her to stifle all the feelings of nature. But I think she ought so far to moderate them as not to pray for life herself, though, for the sake of you and her children, I cannot help asking that she may be spared,—and yet, when I remember that our own mother was removed from us when we were much younger than they are, and under circumstances more trying than theirs could be, and that God, notwithstanding, did not forsake us, but proved himself the Father of the orphan and the Comforter of the afflicted, I feel that, instead of setting ourselves in array against his decrees, we are bound to place ourselves and all that we hold dear in his hands.

“ Your children are more his than ours ; let us not fear that he will abandon those whom we have given up to him ; and as for yourself, I certainly believe that if God should deprive you of so great a treasure, it would only be to draw you more closely to himself. . . . And if it please him to grant this blessing to my dear sister in preference to ourselves, why should we oppose her happiness ? I see none to

be found in this world except in retirement, and in giving up all things for the sake of serving God ; but even this is not to be compared with the full possession of God, and the certainty of never losing that felicity. Let us therefore repress to the best of our power all those natural emotions which are contrary to the spirit of faith and submission ; and as neither effort nor wish on our part can alter the decrees of God, let us do willingly what we *must* do if he has so ordained it. God knows that I love my sister more beyond comparison than when we were both in the world, and yet it seemed to me then that nothing could increase the affection I felt for her ; but whereas at that time my chief wishes and anxieties were for her life, which always had been and still is dearer to me than my own, they now relate to her salvation. Therefore, violent as my grief is, and though I am continually in dread of hearing the fatal news, trembling so that I can scarcely stand if any one looks as though he were going to speak to me, yet, when I take into account the misery and dangers of this present life, especially for a person immersed in worldly occupations, I cannot but accuse myself of selfishly desiring my own benefit rather than hers ; and so my most earnest prayers to God are, that the infant may be an heir of grace, and that the mother's illness may be sanctified,—that she may be weaned from earth, and forget the things she must quit, in contemplating the blessedness awaiting her, which ought to fill her whole soul, and leave no room for any other thought. If her sickness will not permit this, let us, I beseech you, do it for her, and declare before God with heart and lip, that there is nothing upon earth which we desire for ourselves, or for those yet dearer to us, besides his favour.

“ I daily implore him, in my sorrow, that he would enable you and me to prove our entire fidelity to him in this season of trial. My dear brother, we may never have such another ;

let us not endure it without yielding the fruit which God requires at our hands. I think he looks for more than common resignation from us, and that, unless we are ungrateful for his goodness to the dear patient for so many years, we ought not to be satisfied with merely allowing him to take back his loan, instead of cheerfully offering it up, and rejoicing that she should receive the reward of the service she had long striven to render him. Pray for me, as I do for you, that we may have grace so to act. God is near to the afflicted, and ready to hear their cry. I therefore beseech you also to make supplication for my poor brother, that this trial may be the means of winning him back to God, and causing him to see the emptiness of everything earthly. We, as well as my dear sister, have reason to bless God for having made this plain to him, and, through him, to us all, long before we were taught it by experience. I trust that none of us will so faint in the day of adversity as to forget this special favour; or, if it be graven deeply in our memories, that God will not suffer us ungratefully to refuse to cherish the hope it warrants, nor the consolation it affords.

“ Do not wonder that I write as if recovery were hopeless. It has been, as I have told you, my conviction from the first; and though I do not give way as I should if certain of the fact, on the other hand I dare not hope, lest the blow may fall more heavily. May God strengthen us all, and implant in our hearts a vigorous faith, so that we may look upon the departure of our beloved ones as a voyage to heaven. They may have got the start of us by a few moments, but we shall be enabled to imitate them now, and follow them hereafter. Let us beware of complaining when God deprives us of what we most prize, instead of thanking him for having lent it so long. Tell my sister, however she may suffer, to remember the beautiful saying of M. de St Cyran—‘ The sick should look upon their bed as an altar whereon they continually offer

all such matters, and of examining whether they would be likely to prove hindrances to salvation. The preacher was in the pulpit when my uncle went into church, therefore he knew that my aunt could not have spoken to him ; and as his own state and disposition were delineated with great earnestness and soundness of argument, he became deeply affected, for he felt that the discourse was addressed to him by God, and received it as a message to his own soul. My aunt did all she could to fan the new flame, and in a few days my uncle resolved to break off from the world entirely. With this intention, he went into the country, in order to familiarise himself with his future mode of life, and to cease paying and receiving a general course of visits. In this he succeeded so well, that from that time forward he had no more intercourse with his former worldly acquaintance."

The details of Pascal's conversion are given in two letters from Jacqueline to Madame Perier, and in one to Blaise himself, in which she appears to have some misgivings concerning the character of her brother's piety, as being more buoyant and mirthful than M. de Saci, his confessor, was likely to approve :—

TO MADAME PERIER.

" December 8, 1654.

" It is not right that you should be ignorant any longer of what God has wrought in the heart of one so dear to us ; but I wish you to learn it from himself, in order that your every doubt may be done away. All that I have now time to tell you is, that God has graciously given him a great wish to be completely devoted to his service, though in what mode of life is not yet determined. For more than a year he has felt a thorough contempt for the world, and an almost insupportable disgust for its votaries ; and yet, though his excitable temper would naturally lead him to extremes, he behaves with a moderation that encourages me to hope for good. He

has put himself under M. Singlin's direction, I trust with a childlike submission, if the latter will receive him ; for he has not yet consented, but I think in the end he will not refuse.

“ Though his health is worse than it has been for a long time, it does not in the least affect his resolution, which shews that the reasons he formerly urged were only a pretence. I perceive in him a humility and submission, even towards myself, which astonishes me. I have now no more to add, except that it is evident another spirit than his own is striving within him. Farewell : let all this be kept secret, even from him. I am yours entirely,

“ SISTER EUPHÉMIE.”

TO M. PASCAL.

“ January 19, 1655.

“ MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—It gives me as much delight to find you cheerful in solitude, as it used to give me pain when I saw you immersed in the gaieties of the world. I hardly know, however, how M. de Saci* gets along with a penitent so full of happiness, who, instead of expiating his former share in worldly vanities and amusements by unceasing tears, has only relinquished them for more rational enjoyments, and more allowable play of fancy. For my part, I think your penance very moderate indeed, and there are few people who would not envy it. But if M. de Saci is satisfied, so am I, for I think him worthy of the same deference that you have for our Mother Agnes. She has not mentioned to me the subject on which you asked her advice, so it is not she, but I, who tell you to be wiser in future ; and in this I think her spirit inspires me, which I would to God were always the case. And in order to edify you more by example than precept, I herewith put an end to the wilful nonsense of

* Who had received Pascal, from the hands of M. Singlin, as his confessor.

this letter. Your eager desire to renounce every semblance of worldly distinction is very praiseworthy, and I can only wonder that God enables you to feel it, for it seems to me that you have deserved, in more ways than one, to be annoyed for some time to come by the smell of the mire which you have clung to so fondly. It would be but just, if you were to be still fettered by wordly habits, after fleeing to the wilderness, since you chose to keep aloof from the means of deliverance so long. But God has in this respect shewn you that his mercy is greater than all his other attributes, and I pray that he will continue his work, and teach you to use the talents he has bestowed on you aright.

“ The same must be said of your wooden spoon and earthen platter, about which you wrote me. These are the gold and precious stones of Christianity, and none but princes should have them on their tables : we must be truly poor in spirit, if we would deserve such an honour, which, according to M. de Renti,* ought to be denied to common folks. My only comfort is, that this kind of kingship, not being hereditary, it may be acquired after a long period of neglect, as well as lost after long possession. One of the best methods of obtaining it, according to my idea, is to act as if it were already our own ; not indeed through usurpation or hypocrisy, but in order that we may proceed from outward impoverishment to poverty of soul, from bodily humiliation to real humility. God give us grace so to do !

“ I was before you in the discovery that health depends more on our Saviour than on the maxims of Hippocrates. Spiritual regimen soon cures bodily ailments, unless God sees fit to try and to strengthen us by means of sickness. Certainly it is a great privilege to have sufficient health of body,

* The Marquis de Renti, famous for his piety, and whose Memoir was translated for the use of his own people by the celebrated and excellent John Wesley.

enabling us to do what is enjoined upon us for the cure of our souls ; but it is none the less a privilege to take chastisement from God's own hand. If we are his, we must always be well, whether living or dying. We are not told, ' If any one will come after me,' let him perform very painful tasks, that call for great strength, but, ' Let him deny himself.' It is possible that a sick person may do this better than one in perfect health."

TO MADAME PERIER.

" PORT ROYAL, *January 25, 1655.*

" MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—It is difficult to tell if your impatience to receive intelligence of the person you know (Pascal) has been greater than mine to communicate it ; yet, as I had no time to waste, I was afraid to write too soon, lest I might have to unsay what I had prematurely told you. But now, things are in such a train that you ought to know it, let the result be, by God's good pleasure, what it may.

" It would, I think, be doing you an injustice if I did not relate the whole story from the beginning, which was some days before I sent you the first news ; that is, towards the close of September last. He came to see me then, and, during the visit, opened his heart to me in such a way that I felt a deep pity for him, acknowledging that, in the midst of his occupations, which were numerous, and of a nature to excite in him a love for this world, to which every one had cause to think him greatly attached, he still felt admonished to leave it altogether ; that, by reason of his aversion for the follies and amusements of life, and the constant reproaches of conscience, he found himself in a state of detachment from the world, which he had never even approached before ; but that, on the other hand, God seemed to have entirely forsaken him, and he experienced no longings after God, much as he desired to feel them. But this desire he knew was not

the mind and reason which he was
to use in the service as he now was
to do. And when he did he but
did his duty, and that the
Master must have been
pleased the grace

fast tending. But I did not choose to influence him, and merely said that I thought it was our duty to select the best physicians we could find, both for soul and body ; that the bishop was unquestionably our proper confessor, but that, since the Bishop of Paris could not possibly guide all the inhabitants of his diocese, and even his vicars, or parish priests, if they were capable, would find it an overwhelming task, a person like himself, having no establishment, and being at liberty to take up his residence in any parish he chose, was certainly able to choose his own confessor. I added that the Bishop of Geneva (François de Sales), in advising us to select a director of ten thousand, meaning one whom we prefer above ten thousand others, did not, though himself a bishop, and very zealous for the hierarchy, pretend to limit any person's choice within the bounds of his parish. I cannot now remember whether this convinced him, or whether grace, visibly increasing day by day, dissipated the clouds that had darkened so promising a commencement, without the aid of argument ; but at length his mind was made up. But our task was not over yet ; M. Singlin needed much persuasion to induce him to accept the office, for he had a great dread of such undertakings. However, he could not resist our urgent entreaties not to permit a work of such evident sincerity and promise to perish for lack of aid ; and he so far yielded to my importunities as to be willing to take upon him the charge in question, although, in consequence of a long-continued infirmity, he cannot speak without great pain. Meanwhile, many things occurred, too long and unimportant to be repeated here ; the principal event being that our young convert came of his own accord to the conclusion, that a temporary withdrawal from home would be very serviceable to him on many accounts. M. Singlin was then at Port Royal des Champs for the benefit of his health ; and therefore, although he (Pascal) was terribly afraid of having it known that he held communication with

any one in the convent save myself, he nevertheless resolved to go thither under pretext that business called him into the country. By changing his name, leaving his servants in some neighbouring village, and proceeding on foot to M. Singlin, he hoped that no one else would recognise him or discover his object, and that he might thus effect a temporary retreat. I advised him not to take such a step without consulting M. Singlin, who, on his part, forbade it altogether, not having yet decided to become his confessor, so that he had to wait patiently for the latter's return, as he did not wish to do anything in opposition to the orders given him by M. Singlin, in a very beautiful letter, wherein he constituted me as his (Pascal's) directress until God made his own duty plain either to accept the confessorship or not. When M. de Singlin at length returned, I entreated him to release me from my dignity, and said so much, that I obtained my desire, and he took the direction upon himself. They then both thought it would be best for him to make a trip into the country for the sake of being more alone than he could be in town, because his particular friend * had returned, and took up nearly all his time.

“Accordingly, he made him his confidant, obtained his consent, which was not yielded without tears, and set out on the morrow after the festival of the Epiphany with M. de Luines, intending to stay in one of the latter's houses ; and he has now remained there for some time. But not being so much alone as he wished, he has procured a room, or rather a cell, among the recluses of Port Royal, and thence he writes me that he finds himself extremely happy, being lodged and treated like a prince, but a prince of St Bernard's stamp, dwelling in a lonely spot, where the profession of poverty is carried out to the utmost extent that discretion will allow. He is present at every service from prime to complines, and

* M. de Roarmes.

does not find the least inconvenience in rising at five o'clock. It seems to be God's will, also, that he should fast as well as watch, though in so doing he must defy all medical rules, which forbid him to do either, for his supper begins to give him pain in the chest, and I think he will leave off taking it. He will not miss his directress. M. Singlin, who has remained in town during the whole time, having provided him a confessor,* with whom he was not before acquainted—a man beyond praise, who has completely charmed him, and is, moreover, of a good race. He (Pascal) was not at all weary there, but some business forced him, against his wish, to return ; and, in order not to lose what he had gained, he has obtained a room here, and lodged in it since Thursday, without making his arrival known at home. He did not tell any one whither he was going when he set out, except Madame Perier and Duchesne, whom he took with him. It was suspected, however, but only on conjecture. Some say he has turned monk ; others, hermit ; others, again, that he is at Port Royal ; and he knows all this, but does not care for it. This is the state of affairs at present.

“ Hitherto he has seemed so much afraid of having all this known, that I dared not even ask him to send you word. But some days before his return I wrote him on the subject ; he answered that if it were enjoined on him to let you know, he would do so, but he should not think of it, for his own part, because his progress in the divine life was so small, that he did not know what to say ; yet, if I thought it was proper to write, he was very willing to have me write, though he could not see what there was to communicate. On this I began my letter at my earliest leisure, the day of its date, but I have not been able to find time to finish it until to-day, February 8.

* M. de Saci is here meant, the same who afterwards, during his imprisonment in the Bastile, translated the Holy Scriptures into the French tongue.

"Business now detains him at home, but I think, as soon as he can he will go back to his solitude. Yesterday he told me that he intended to write you, by God's help, and wished me to write. He is anxious to do something for our little cousin, the daughter of Pascal the overseer; and as this convent is very charitable, we hoped to get her received here as a boarder, but I doubt whether mother or child would be willing. Write me word about it, if you please, as soon as you can, and say how we had better manage it. I am very anxious that she should come, for I look upon her as a sister, and cannot look upon her situation, either bodily or spiritual, without shuddering. Besides, she is my father's niece, and I can understand how he would have felt for her, from my own feelings towards your children."

During this retreat of Pascal's at Port Royal des Champs, there occurred between him and M. de Saci, to whose spiritual care Singlin had consigned him, the celebrated discussion upon Epictetus and Montaigne, in which Pascal passed in review the doctrines of the Epicureans and Stoicks, and won from his austere confessor expressions of wonder and admiration. Fontaine, the secretary of De Saci, who was present at the conference, and wrote down its substance, tells us that all the inhabitants of Port Royal des Champs were full of delight at the conversion and the sight of M. Pascal, more especially admiring the almighty power of that grace which in almost unparalleled mercy had thus deeply humbled a mind in itself so elevated, at the foot of the cross.

After some months spent in the practices of a fervent yet rational piety, Pascal's eager temperament urged him into an extreme of exaggerated devotion, for which even his sister reproached him, in the following note:—

" December 1, 1655.

" I have been congratulated on the great fervour of devotion which has lifted you so far above all ordinary customs, that you consider even a broom as a superfluous piece of furniture. It is needful, however, that, for some months at least, you should be as clean as now you are dirty, so that your success may be equally manifest in your lowly and vigilant care of the body, submissive to your spirit, as it has been in a thorough personal neglect. After that, if you find it glorious and edifying to others, to look filthy, you can do so, especially if it be a means of holiness, which I very much doubt. Saint Bernard did not think it was."

It appears that Pascal had formerly had a taste for the elegancies of life, for handsomely finished houses, furniture, &c. Now, however, he had fallen into the other extreme of indifference. He contends, in his *Pensées*, that it is the duty of Christians to employ poor artisans rather than skilful ones, because the former have more need of help. It was one of the rules of Port Royal to do without the aid of servants as much as possible, because "Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Jaqueline had a right to reproach her brother for his negligence, as we find, from her next letter to Madame Perier, that she herself, although the spouse of heaven, had recently been employed in the most menial offices of the convent, which, however, were allotted to her merely as a preparation for one of its honourable posts. She was soon afterwards appointed Sub-mistress of the Lesser Noviciate. This department of Port Royal included all candidates for admission to the sisterhood, whether they came from without the convent, or from its female school; and, while belonging to it, their patience was tested, their maidenly pride and vanity mortified in every possible way, in order to find out if they

involves also great peril, for it is very difficult to speak of God in a godly manner, and very dangerous to feed others from our own penury, instead of from his abundance. Pray for me, that my two mites may be as acceptable to God as the large alms of the wealthier, and that he may graciously teach me while I am teaching others. Farewell, dear sister. Yours ever in our Lord,

“ SISTER EUPHÉMIE, *an unworthy nun.*”

Jaqueline's next letter to her sister was in answer to some inquiries of the latter relating to the best method of educating her children :—

“ PORT ROYAL, April 25, 1655.

“ MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—I take a large sheet of paper, because it is my resolution, by God's help, to send you a long letter. When I first read the one you forwarded by my brother, I did not intend to answer it at all, for it seemed to me that I was very far from having the requisite ability for such a task, and besides that, I ought not to undertake it. For there is nothing in my opinion so provoking as to see a little novice, whose eyes have scarcely begun to discern the true light, taking it upon herself to enlighten others, and to become their torch-bearer. It is really unendurable. But since, on account of the humility of our mothers, and the illness of M. Singlin, I am totally unable to procure the aid you are seeking elsewhere, and since I was once in the same strait that you describe, I do not know that there is any harm in saying to you what I have said to myself, for I feel as if you and I had but one heart and one soul in Christ Jesus.

“ When I had written thus far, it occurred to me that M. de Rebours might perhaps be so kind as to give you some advice. I broke off, therefore, in order to consult him, and

by his command I write what he is just now unable to write you himself on account of the weakness of his eyes, and because, moreover, he says it is not his place to dictate the conduct of any one. That, he persists in believing, is M. Singlin's mission, and not his.

“ He bids me say to you,—It is a settled thing, that the care of governing a family is one of the chief and indispensable duties of its head, though the care ought certainly to be divided ; that of boys belonging mainly to the husband, and that of girls to the wife. This, however, is not the case in your family ; for M. Perier being too much engaged to attend to it properly, the responsibility falls upon you, but this does not release him, because he is bound to fulfil his most important duties first. If you could persuade him to discharge them, you would yourself be free, but if not, the burden rests upon you. You are therefore bound (since you wish to labour for their salvation, and not merely for their external improvement, which would be easy enough) to endeavour, in the first place, to understand their dispositions, and by various little trials to ascertain whether they are inclined to be pious or not, whether they are hypocritical, or bold in the display of naughtiness, what are their besetting sins, and what their tendencies to good. You should also try to make them love you, never reproving them sharply, but always with firm severity. To do this, it is best not to speak to them until all your angry emotions have subsided. Then try to make them ashamed of what they have done, and explain to them that you are far more grieved by their sin than because they have offended you. And this lesson must often be repeated ; for it is a general rule, that uncultivated minds—for instance, those of children and common people—can form no other idea of the persons about them than that which those persons themselves convey. Thus, if we wish to have them love us, we must tell them that we love them, and

that we should feel we had failed in our most important duty, if we were to fail in affection towards them. And if we are careful to repeat this very often, it would be extremely difficult for others to persuade them to the contrary. It will not do, therefore, to be satisfied with giving them to understand that we dearly love them in a roundabout way, or with shewing this by our tender care of them in sickness or in their little griefs and wants. All these are favourable opportunities of shewing that we love them, and we are not to let such occasions slip ; but it is necessary, in addition, to tell them so plainly and repeatedly,—telling them also, with equal clearness, that we only love them on condition that they remain obedient, and do their duties faithfully, both to God and their teachers.

“ Discretion must dictate when it is best to use oil or vinegar. All that can be said in general is this :—When your private interests alone are in question, it is well to be patient, not concealing the inconvenience they have caused you, but shewing that you forgive it, and that, if they must do wrong, you had rather be the sufferer yourself than have any one else suffer through them. You can be equally indulgent when it is a case of inadvertence, such as losing, breaking, or injuring anything, unless through glaring carelessness. Explain to them that you are willing to pass over faults of such a kind, and to put up with the loss, so long as you perceive that they are careful to avoid what is displeasing to God. Make them notice, at the same time, how few persons feel so ; but do this without ostentation ; say something tending to prove that you do not think highly of yourself ; and be careful to insinuate that you had rather be in their position than in your own ; for it is a good plan to point out frequently the advantages and dangers of those of riper years. But whenever they transgress against God, disobey their teachers, or quarrel among themselves, then is the time

to shew yourself severe, and even terrible ; for children and every-day people, like the Jews, can only be influenced by promises and threats. Having thus regulated their outward behaviour, as by force, you may look for God's grace to bestow on them that inward spirit of penitence, to attain which is the aim of all your discipline. On such occasions it will not do to forbear ; you must inform their tutor, and exhort him to punish them severely, unless there is reason to believe that they are truly sorry, and will do so no more. It is good when the threat of sending them away is their greatest dread ; and in order that it may be, you must always have them treated kindly and equitably, which is the only way of attaching them, until affection has taken the place of self-interest.

“ To bring these imperfect details to a close. You should accustom yourself to take them separately into your chamber, once a week at least, and there from time to time question them as to what they believe and how they pray. Explain to them the articles of faith, but very briefly, and dwell more on the moral to be drawn from them. For instance, if you are speaking of the Unity of God in the Trinity of divine persons, you can say that, amidst all the multiplicity of worldly objects and business, we are to have but one supreme love, one wish, and one duty, which must regulate every other. On the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Eucharist, shew them that we are bound to love the Saviour, and to imitate him whom we adore. Teach them the commandments of God and the ordinances of his Church, and make it clear to their minds that these include many more things than is usually supposed. M. de Rebours is also quite of opinion that you should not omit hearing them pray to God together, every evening.”

Jaqueline, as mistress of the novices, and charged with the

1. *What is the best way to increase the number of people who use a particular service?* This is a question that can be asked of any service, from a local library to a national health program. It is a question that requires a careful analysis of the service and its users, and a consideration of the factors that influence their use of the service. It is a question that can be answered by a variety of methods, including surveys, interviews, and observational studies. It is a question that can be answered by a variety of methods, including surveys, interviews, and observational studies.

CHAPTER VII.

Jansenism and the Holy Thorn.

SOME knowledge of the rise and progress of Jansenism, and of a few of its prominent adherents, is necessary in order to understand its controversy with Jesuitism, and the state of ecclesiastical affairs at the time of that strange occurrence, the miracle of the Holy Thorn.

Cornelius Jansen, or Jansenius, was born in Holland in 1585, received his early education at Utrecht, and finished his studies at the University of Louvain. One of his fellow-students there, Jean du Verger de Hauranne, afterwards better known as the Abbé de St Cyran, became very intimate with him, and during their stay at Louvain, which lasted six years, the two friends were brought into contact with some who secretly believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace ; and thus learned many principles of divine truth differing greatly from the teachings usually inculcated by the Church of Rome. They also became acquainted with the system of the Jesuits, and the inroads it was calculated to make on Scriptural truth and practical morality. The works of St Augustine were the favourite study of both.

St Cyran had in early youth been a companion of him who subsequently became Cardinal de Richelieu, and personal regard, as well as the desire of binding a man so eminent for piety and learning to his own service, made the latter shew

in the same manner that all your money is
now in the hands of the Devil. The Devil
is the author of every sin that is committed on the
earth. He did write the greatest sin, as
the Devil is the author of every sin. The Devil's greater
sin is that he has now the money and the
whole world, and has universally corrupted in the world
and the writings of the Devil. Though money and
money is written in the most positive and ready spirit
so often. While on Christmas, the most name of the most
miserable Devil in the present, for the purpose of giving
dinner for one of his military officers-prisoners, the Devil
and his messengers the Devil said. His officers to the Devil
said who covered the table, were as follows.—⁴ I could

you to buy cloth which is fine, good, and suitable to their rank. It is, I believe, customary for gentlemen to wear gold lace, and ladies black lace, when in company. If this is true, please to add those decorations to the dresses, and have them made neatly, yet handsomely, so that, in looking at one another, they may forget for a little while that they are in prison."

Jansen returned from Bayonne to his native Holland, and there became Bishop of Ypres. He devoted himself to the study of St Augustine's writings, reading and collating the whole of them ten times, and certain portions thirty times. The result of twenty years thus spent was a commentary entitled *Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii*; and on the day of its completion the author died of the plague, leaving his work to the judgment of the Vatican. His executors, however, published it in 1640, without consulting the Pope. It maintained the doctrines known as Calvinistic or Evangelical in England—as orthodox in America—and insisted on the truth that salvation is the gift of God's free unmerited grace, yet that the individual called of God to salvation must manifest the validity of his election by unwearied activity in every good word and work. St Cyran had assisted in the composition of the treatise, and used all his influence to disseminate its doctrines.

Meanwhile the Abbess Angélique, after fulfilling her benevolent mission as a reformer, had returned to Port Royal des Champs. There, however, as has before been stated, the diseases engendered by the marshy grounds around the convent produced so lamentable an effect upon the health of the sisterhood, that Mad. Arnauld purchased for them a hotel in the Faubourg St Jacques in Paris, whither for a season they removed, and which is spoken of in the present Memoir as Port Royal de Paris. This removal took place in 1626.

In 1637, the year before St Cyran's incarceration, which

lasted until 1643, a set of devout men, followers of that holy ecclesiastic, gradually assembled in the forsaken cloisters. They had renounced the world, and were living in the observance of a rigorous system of bodily and spiritual self-denial, though they took no vows. Penitence, solitude, silence, were required of them ; they hardly allowed themselves food enough to support life, and spent their time in prayer, in works of charity, in the education of youth, and the defence of Christianity. The honoured names Nicole, Fontaine, Lemaitre, the celebrated advocate De Saci, his brother, who translated the Scriptures into French, and Racine, can only be mentioned here. The *great* Arnauld, the head of the community after St Cyran's death, was the youngest brother of the Mère Angélique, and partook of her indomitable energy and talent. While in the enjoyment of wealth and distinction, the young Antoine Arnauld, already distinguished for genius and learning, paid a visit to St Cyran in his dungeon, and became imbued with his principles. He renounced his preferments and the favour of Richelieu, who endeavoured, but in vain, to prevent him from being made a doctor of the Sorbonne, or University of Paris. From that time, until his death, he devoted himself to the maintenance of truth against all hazards, and his controversial works fill forty quarto volumes. When at the age of eighty he was preparing for a fresh conflict, a friend suggested to him that, having toiled so long and manfully, he was now entitled to rest. "Rest !" he answered, "will not eternity be long enough to rest in ?" And although this principle was not enunciated till life drew near its close, the spirit of it had animated his whole career. In 1643 he published a book, *De la Fréquente Communion*, intended to correct the lax standard of church-membership in his own day, by reviving the early discipline of the Church, and at the same time to stigmatise the morality of the Jesuits as it deserved, who, instead of strictness in preparing the

penitents for the communion, made its frequent participation the chief means of grace, desecrating the rite and deceiving the recipient. Its appearance commenced the famous quarrel between Jesuits and Jansenists, which, after lasting for seventy years, closed with the destruction of Port Royal. The Jesuits were equally amazed and indignant. They could not refute Arnauld, but their influence at Rome caused him to be cited thither to answer for his doctrines, and not choosing to venture his person in Rome, he remained in concealment for some twenty-five years in and about Port Royal. The liberties of the French Church were so deeply involved in the controversy as to occasion a universal interest in its progress.

The origin of M. de St Cyran's connexion with the convent of Port Royal has been narrated. Shortly before his death, which occurred a few months after his release from Vincennes in 1643, he persuaded the Mère Angélique that it was her duty to return to the valley of Chevreuse. Accordingly, she and some of her nuns once more took possession of the convent, and the recluses* withdrew to La Grange, a farm in its neighbourhood.

In both convents a course of almost incredible self-denial and benevolence was pursued. The excess of the nuns' charity sometimes left them without food, and nearly without clothing. The horrors of civil war during the Fronde, drove the poor peasants of the vicinity to seek refuge from marauders within the sacred walls. At one time, the church was piled up to the ceiling with oats, peas, beans, and corn, the dormitory and chapter-house being filled with horses, and the infirmary with sick and wounded.

When these evils were in a measure subdued, the Jesuits renewed their attacks. Their implacable hostility to Port

* Those who wish for a more detailed account of the recluses of Port Royal are referred to the brilliant essay of Sir James Stephen on the Port Royalists, published first in the *Edinburgh Review*, and afterwards reprinted in his *Miscellanies*.

Royal had other grounds besides the attachment felt by its inmates for St Cyran and the doctrines of grace. "To the family of Arnauld," says Tregelles, "they appeared to have a hereditary hatred, in the remembrance of the manner in which the father of the Mère Angélique had acted against the Jesuits in the days of their early introduction into France, when, with extraordinary force and eloquence, he attacked their institute, and charged home upon their order the crime of the murder of Henry III."

They first accused the Port Royalists of despising the Eucharist, using no holy water or images in their churches, and praying neither to saints nor the Virgin. Protestant sympathy with the accused would be greatly enhanced had the imputations proved true, but, unhappily, there is too much evidence to the contrary, even in the writings of Jacqueline Pascal alone. The next onset was more skilfully managed. One of their number, Father Cornet, drew up five propositions from the work of Jansenius, and denounced them to the Holy See as heretical opinions taught by St Cyran and Arnauld. The Pope pronounced their condemnation, and the Jesuits were triumphant, since the Port Royalists could not refuse submission to his authority. But Arnauld, though he did not defend the propositions, refused to abandon Jansenius, and declared that he could not find the objectionable statements in the *Augustinus*. The Jesuits asserted that nevertheless there they were, but refused to point out the paragraphs containing them. Cardinal Mazarin, who now held the reins of empire, favoured the Jesuits, to which order the king's confessor also belonged, and the two appointed a committee of doctors, who decided that the propositions condemned by the Pope were in the book of Jansenius in sentiment, if not in the precise words. All the ecclesiastics and religious communities in France were at once required to sign an acknowledgment to that purpose. Arnauld, as his

enemies had hoped, instead of signing, published a statement of his own belief in regard to the doctrines of grace, drawn from St Augustine, and asserted that Jansenius had written nothing more. Thus arose the question of *droit* and *fait*. No one denied the Pope's right (*droit*) to condemn any doctrine as heretical: there were many who denied the fact (*fait*) that the censured propositions could be found in the work of Jansenius. Anne of Austria, the Queen Regent, was completely under Mazarin's influence, and easily persuaded that heretics, like the Port Royalists, ought not to have the charge of children. She therefore commissioned her lieutenants to break up the entire establishment, and its destruction seemed inevitable, but for an occurrence so extraordinary, that one can hardly believe it in spite of the weight of evidence by which it is attested.

Margaret Perier, niece of Jacqueline and Blaise Pascal, and youngest daughter of M. and Mad. Perier, a child then about eleven years old, at school in the convent, had for three years and a half endured intense suffering from a *fistula lacrymalis* of the most obstinate and malignant kind, and her medical attendants were about, as a last resource, to cauterise it. In the meantime, a clerical relative of the Mère Angélique, who had a great fancy for collecting relics, M. de la Polterie, had obtained possession of what was considered a veritable splinter from the Redeemer's crown of thorns; and the ladies of Port Royal being very desirous of seeing it, a day was appointed for the purpose.

We leave Jacqueline to tell the sequel in her letters to Mad. Perier. She makes hardly any reference to the preceding difficulties, or the impending persecution of Port Royal. It is possible that she did not know much about them, for the *Constitutions* direct the exclusion of worldly topics from general conversation:—

“ As to what is passing in the world, the Abbess can

impart to the sisters such information as she thinks would be serviceable in leading them to value their own advantages, to feel compassion for persons in affliction, and to pray more for the Church and the kingdom, that God may in mercy restrain the sins and evils which provoke his righteous indignation. But it is better for her not to enter into details. These might cause too much distraction of mind, and revive an interest in worldly matters, which, in accordance with our Lord's injunction, 'Let the dead bury their dead,' ought not to be felt."

If, however, an exception was made in Jacqueline's favour, the knowledge does not seem to have troubled her. After breathing the atmosphere of faith and patience so long, her spiritual strength had become invigorated, and the heart which once throbbed with such painful anxiety in the maternal arms of Angélique, now knew no care but that of performing the duties of each day aright. We are told of the Mère Agnes, that "Eternity was already mirrored in her soul; for she looked only at the present moment, and neither troubled herself in prospect of the future, nor in retrospect of the past. The impress of eternal realities seemed to efface all past events from her recollection. She was never heard to speak of things that had happened to her, or that she had performed. Forgetting everything that was behind, she aimed only to perfect what was yet lacking in her piety." It is more than probable that, during Jacqueline Pascal's novitiate, she acquired from her preceptress the secret of that unruffled composure which nothing could disturb but sin.

Letter from the nun Jacqueline to her sister Madame Perier :—

"*POET ROYAL, March 9, 1656.*

"**MY VERY DEAR SISTER**,—Lent will not hinder me from writing you a few words, although I wrote before on Friday last, since I have only good news to tell you. I think you

are aware that our Jubilee began yesterday, and will last a fortnight ; and that, among other privileges, there is to be a communion-service on Sunday, April 2. I make this preamble in order to increase the joy it will afford you to learn that your eldest daughter is to be confirmed and to receive the sacrament for the first time on that day. She told me so this morning, and asked me to pray for her, so earnestly that she wept.

“ This is good news. But there is other news to be told, not better indeed, but more wonderful. And, to let you know the whole affair, without increase or diminution, I must begin from the beginning. On Friday, March 24, 1656, M. de la Polterie, the clergyman, sent hither a very handsome reliquary to our Mothers (having within it a splinter from the holy crown of thorns, set in a little sun of gilt silver), in order that the whole community might enjoy the sight. Before returning it, they had it placed on a little altar in the choir, and when an anthem had been chanted in honour of the holy crown, each sister went up and kissed it on her knees, and so did the children afterwards, one by one. Sister Flavia, their governess, who stood by, made a sign to Maggie (Margaret Perier), as she drew near, to touch her eye with the relic, and herself took it up and laid it on the sore, hardly thinking what she was about. When all had retired, it was sent back to M. de la Polterie. That same evening, Sister Flavia, who had forgotten the circumstance, heard Maggie saying to one of the little girls, ‘ My eye is cured ; it does not pain me at all now.’ Not a little surprised, she went to the child, and found that the swelling in the corner of her eye, which in the morning was as thick as her own finger tip, and very long and hard, had quite gone down, and the eye itself appeared as healthy as the other, and looked precisely like it, although, before the relic was applied, it was watery and pain-

ful to behold. She pressed it, and instead of discharging matter (a thick water), which it had always done before, there was nothing more to be seen than in her own eye. You can imagine her astonishment. However, she scarcely dared to hope, and merely mentioned to Mother Agnes how the case stood, waiting for time to shew if the cure were as real as it appeared. Mother Agnes was kind enough to tell me about it next day, and as we could not hope that so great a wonder would be completed in so short a time, she said that, if the child continued well, and it seemed likely that God would in this way heal her, she would willingly request M. de la Polterie to repeat the favour he had done us, in order that the miracle might be completed. But hitherto it has not been necessary, and a week having now elapsed (for I could not finish this letter on Tuesday last) without the return of a single symptom, it really needs far more faith for any one who did not see her in her former state to believe that the eye was diseased, than it does for those who did see her to believe that nothing could have wrought so instantaneous a cure, except a miracle quite as great and quite as visible as the restoring of sight to a blind man. Besides the difficulty in her eye, she suffered in many ways proceeding from it ; she could hardly sleep at all for the pain it gave her ; there were two places in her head which could not be touched with a comb, because they seemed to be connected with the nerves of her eye, while, only two days before, it had made my own eyes water merely to look at hers, and the discharge smelt very badly. Now there is nothing of the kind to be seen, no more than if nothing had ailed her. However, not to make too sure of so wonderful a favour without good grounds, it was thought proper to send for M. Delançay, who had seen her a short time before, and indeed had frequently seen her since she left off using the lotion of M. de Chatillon. He thought the eye so diseased that it must inevitably be

cauterised, and explained his reasons for this very clearly. He will be here to-day without fail ; and, by God's help, I will send you word what he thinks now, and why he was sure that fire alone could effect a cure ; that is, if he come early enough ; if not, I will write on Tuesday, D.V.

“ It is a double mercy to be both favoured of God and hated of men. Pray for us, that God may keep us from being puffed up by the first, or dejected by the last, and give us grace to look on both as the effect of his mercy. I am particularly glad that I had nothing to do with this miracle personally, because now my joy and thankfulness are unmixed with fear. Farewell.

“ M. Delançay has now seen Maggie, and considers the cure a perfect and miraculous one. He has appointed a week, to make sure that there is no relapse. Till then, it is not to be spoken of.”

To Madame Perier, on the same subject :—

“ FRIDAY AFTERNOON, *March 31, 1656.*

“ M. DELANÇAY came this morning. . . . The state of the child's eye when he saw it about two months since,* convinced him that she must have it cauterised this very spring, because delay would only allow the bone to decay still further, and the consequences might be so dreadful that they scarcely dared to tell me of them. It was possible that her nose might fall off, and half her face be eaten away. However, he did not despair of curing her by means of fire, neither did he feel very confident of success, but said that no other earthly remedy could avail.

“ When M. Delançay came, she was taken to him without a word. He looked at her in equal silence, turned her

* Jaqueline enters into details of her niece's sufferings, which are too sickening to bear repetition.

round, pressed her eye, put his spatula into her nose, and seemed greatly astonished to find nothing there. He was asked if he did not remember how diseased it was. He answered with much simplicity, 'That is what I am hunting for, but I cannot find it.' I begged him to look into her mouth. He did so, put in his spatula, and began to laugh, saying, 'There is nothing whatever here.' Thereupon my sister Flavia told him what had occurred. He made her go over it again, for he is a very wise and prudent man ; and when he had asked if it went away at once, and the child answered yes, he said that he would at any time furnish a certificate that such a cure could not be wrought unless by miracle. He does not affirm, any more than we do, that the disease will not return, because that is known only to God ; but he declares that she is perfectly free from it now, and quite well. These are his own words, or their equivalent. Nevertheless, he advises us to keep it quiet for the present, and to restrain our grateful emotions within the convent walls as much as we can, for fear of a wrong construction being put upon them. He did not explain himself any further, but we know that he meant to say 'our hour was not yet come ;' and that the words, 'This is your hour,' are applicable to others. I earnestly desire that the rest of the verse may not be so suitable as it now seems ; for everything which opposes itself to the light of truth may well be called *darkness*.* He then exhorted the child to profit by so great a mercy ; and her governess told us that nothing is a more convincing proof of the miracle to her than to see Maggie act as if God really changed her heart, for ever since she has been a much better girl Farewell : pray that the Lord may graciously make my spiritual eyes very healthy, pure, and clear-sighted."

* Alluding to the Jesuit persecution of Port Royal, and their opposition to the doctrine of salvation through the grace of Christ alone.

“ PORT ROYAL, October 24, 1656.

“ MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—Doubtless my brother's delight has got the better of his indolence, and his account of the conclusion of the miracle has preceded mine, concerning which there is nothing further to be told, except that some eight or ten days ago the child was examined by regular surgeons in presence of the judge of the Bishop's court, whither she was taken by her sister in a secular dress, and that, yesterday or to-day, he pronounced a sentence of approbation or verification (I do not know its right name) on the miraculous cure. We are consequently going, on Friday next, by God's help, to perform a solemn *Te Deum* and a special mass of thanksgiving. The child will hold a lighted taper in the outer church. We shall thus attempt to display in part the gratitude that God enables us to feel at heart for so marvellous an interposition. It is the prerogative of God alone to act as God, in bringing the greatest good out of the greatest evil, and the deepest joy out of the heaviest cross. Let us implore him to dispose us always to allow ourselves to be led blindfolded by so certain a guide.”

Extract of another letter to Mad. Perier :—

“ PORT ROYAL, October 30, 1656.

“ MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—My brother will not fail to send you several printed copies of the sentence pronounced by the Grand Vicar, and you will thereby see that we were commanded to chant a mass of thanksgiving on Friday the 27th instant. The celebration began on the evening before, by our singing hymns on the holy crown; and on Friday the usual services were doubled, and we sang every hour, the choristers remaining in the choir, as is the custom on days of high festival. To complete the whole, my little sister Marguerite (we no longer call her Maggie) was in the choir

among the novices, because the celebration was held on her account, although the little girls are not often admitted. Early in the morning the church was crowded, in spite of a heavy rain. There was a little altar erected in our choir near the grating, which was left open. It was dressed in white, and covered with a handsome calico veil, on which our Mother placed the reliquary containing the holy thorn, with a great many lights around it. From this altar the Grand Vicar came to take it up, carrying the crucifix himself, while sixteen deacons accompanied him, bearing wax tapers. He bore it thence, covered with a canopy, as in the procession of the holy communion, to the High Altar, two deacons carrying incense before it, and there deposited it on a little decorated stand, made expressly for the purpose. Meanwhile all the nuns, with their long veils lowered, chanted the hymn *Exite Filiae Sion*, and the anthem *O Corona*, kneeling behind the grating, and each holding a lighted taper; so did the child herself, who knelt before the rails in front of our choir, dressed very neatly and modestly in a gray frock and hood. She had two large cushions to kneel on, in order to be high enough for the people to see her, and they crowded and climbed about wherever they could, so as to get a good view. Then the altar was removed from the choir, and the Grand Vicar said high mass. The chanting to the holy crown was very solemn, and the middle of the grating was left open, that the congregation might have the comfort of beholding the child, who was placed in front on a desk covered with a carpet, having a lighted taper before her, and a chair to sit on when she wished. She remained there as calmly as if it had been her accustomed place, and knelt and rose at the proper time, with as much modesty and grace as if she had had long training. . . . The weather cleared during the ceremony, and the church was not empty during the whole day. So many copies of the Vicar's sentence were sold, at a sou

each, that a hundred francs were taken merely in the court before the church. I have neither time nor ability to speak of my own feelings on the occasion ; you will appreciate them by your own. That which belongs to God is inexpressible, and taught far better by experience than words. Let us beseech him to enable us never to forget this marvellous cure, and not to let time efface its impression from our hearts. It will be no less astonishing ten years hence than it is now, to think of such a disease being instantaneously healed. I am forced to leave off, having but one drop of ink left to say that Madame Daumont, who is very kind to us all, sends you the portrait of our little sister Marguerite in copperplate, feeling sure that it would give you pleasure. It has touched the holy thorn. Adieu," &c.

The question of the origin of the miracle we do not propose to discuss. Its authenticity was fully established, not merely by the surgeons who first witnessed the cure, but by a special investigation, conducted through M. Felix, the king's head surgeon, at the request of Anne of Austria, who, disliking the Jansenists, would have rejoiced to see the miracle disproved. But the queen-mother dared not resist the weight of evidence, nor proceed in her designs against a convent on which she was convinced that Heaven had set its approving seal. She therefore recalled her lieutenant, suspended her threatened penalties, and Port Royal remained in peace. The gratitude of its inmates must be left to the imagination, for so inevitable had their destruction appeared, that the then Abbess, Madame Sireau des Agnes, shut herself up in her cell, and did nothing by day or night but lift up her heart to God, knowing that no hope of human help was left her.

Jaqueline Pascal vented the exuberance of her joy in a long poem, and Port Royal, relaxing from its severe prohibi-

tion of poetry, permitted the verses to be published. Sir James Stephen remarks that "time must be at some discount with any man who should employ it in adjusting the balance of improbabilities in the case of the Holy Thorn." The same may be said of any one attempting to translate the tedious stanzas in which Jacqueline, to use her own expression, "satisfied the impetuosity of a zeal whose warmth forbade her to be silent."

The appearance of the *Provincial Letters* was nearly simultaneous with the miracle. As Pascal, after his conversion, remained firm in his determination to forsake the world, it soon forsook him. He passed much of his time in prayer,* and in reading the Scriptures with such diligence that he appeared to know the whole Bible by heart, could at once detect any misquotation, and decide whether or not a doctrine was to be found there, and if so, in what place. He also read good commentaries; and, while the main object of his studies was personal edification and growth in grace, he was no stranger to the more abstruse questions of predestination and man's free-will. He had but little acquaintance with the tenets of the Reformation, and shared the prejudices of Port Royal against heretics, being quite unaware how nearly his own belief agreed with theirs. His early reverence for religion had changed into a tender yet glowing love for its truths, and this love urged him into an unflinching contest with everything that opposed them. None, therefore, need marvel at suddenly beholding him on the battle-field, where, with invisible yet potent arm, he dealt out such vigorous blows, that the scattered, down-trodden remnant of Jansenists again rallied, and spread dismay among the ranks of their foes.

* It is a fact worthy of notice that those Christians who, like Luther, have been most renowned for enduring usefulness in action or in writing, have invariably devoted the best part of the day to prayer and pious meditation on the Word of God.—*Reuchlin*.

Margaret Perier, in her *Memoirs*, gives the following account of the origin and mode of publication of the famous *Letters* :—

“ It was M. Pascal who, in 1656, attacked the Jesuit morality, and this is how he came to do it. He had gone to Port Royal des Champs, for the purpose of passing some time in retirement, as he often did. The Sorbonne was then busy with the condemnation of M. Arnauld, who was likewise at Port Royal. The gentlemen there all begged him to write in his own defence, saying, ‘ Are you going to let yourself be condemned like a child, that has nothing to say for itself ? ’ He wrote, therefore, and read his production to them all, but no one gave it any praise. M. Arnauld, who did not covet applause, then said : ‘ I see very clearly that you think this a poor performance, and I believe you are in the right ; ’ and, turning to M. Pascal, he added, ‘ But you, who are young, ought to do something.’ M. Pascal wrote the first Provincial Letter, and read it to them. M. Arnauld cried, ‘ That is excellent ; every one will like it ; it must be printed.’ This was done ; the success it had is well known, and the work went on. M. Pascal, who rented a house in Paris, went to an inn where he was not known, and remained there at work, under the name of M. de Mons. It was at the sign of King David, in the Rue des Poiriers, just opposite the College of Clermont, now called the College of Louis the Great. M. Perier, his brother-in-law, who was then in Paris, took lodgings in the same inn, as a stranger from the country, not letting the relationship be known. Father Dufretal, a Jesuit, related both to M. Pascal and M. Perier, called on the latter, and told him that, being a relative, he was glad to be able to give him warning, that the Society of Jesuits were firmly persuaded that M. Pascal, his brother-in-law, was the author of those little letters against them which had such a run in Paris, and that M. Perier would do well to warn him, and

advise him to stop writing them, or he might find himself in trouble. M. Perier thanked him, but said it would be a useless task, for M. Pascal would answer that he could not help their suspicions, since, if he were to disavow the authorship, they would not believe him, and therefore, if they chose to suspect him, there was no remedy. The Jesuit then went away, repeating that he ought to be warned and to beware. M. Perier was greatly relieved by his departure, for there was at that very time a score of copies of the seventh or eighth letter spread out upon his bed to dry. Luckily the curtains were drawn, and a Jesuit brother, who had accompanied Father Dufretal, and sat near the bed, did not perceive it. M. Perier immediately ran up-stairs to tell M. Pascal, whose room was overhead, though the Jesuits had no idea of his being so near them."

"The immortal Provincials," called by the exasperated Jesuits "*the immortal liars*," were printed in the immediate neighbourhood of the Jesuits' College, where it was rightly supposed that no one would dream of discovering the author. Their circulation was immense, and the effect prodigious. The Chancellor, a warm ally of the Jesuits, became so enraged, that it was necessary for him to be let blood seven times; a remedy applied in those days to all sorts of disease, whether of the mind or body. The secret intrigues of Port Royal had long been complained of by their opponents, but the latter now saw themselves the objects of a more dangerous though an open attack, directed by a chieftain at once skilful and unseen.

The first letter was dated January 23, 1656. The country friend to whom Louis de Montalte (the assumed name of Pascal*) imparted such lively comments on Parisian Church

* And an allusion, probably, to the *high mountains* of his native Auvergne. One of those lofty eminences, the Puy de Dome, was connected with the decisive experiments also as to his own discovery of the pressure of the atmosphere.

affairs, is supposed to have been his brother-in-law, Mons. Perier. The Port Royalists had at first some scruples concerning the lawfulness of using the carnal weapons of satire and wit against the enemies of truth. Singlin, in particular, felt that merriment was out of place when applied to religious subjects. Success, however, proved in this case the test of propriety as well as genius, and all at length acquiesced in the employment of measures both innocent in themselves, and more than sanctified by the result. "There is something sublime," says Reuchlin, "in mirth amidst the fearful perils then threatening the little flock of Port Royal. The man who can jest when his vessel is foundering, either must be godless—or his confidence in God must be strong indeed."

Yet Pascal, while relying on God's help and cheerfully doing battle for the right, looked well to the fastenings of his armour. Perfect as was his mastery of style,* he was so anxious that every word should be well chosen and effective, as in one instance to have re-written a letter (the 18th) thirteen times. The end attained was well worth the labour.

As to their contents, they are thus characterised by Treilles :—

" In these remarkable letters, Pascal shewed with extraordinary force how narrow the question really was—whether five propositions are in the *Augustinus* or not—when no one had there pointed them out ; he shewed by what unworthy compromises the condemnation of Arnauld had been obtained, and, besides touching on doctrinal points which were involved, he firmly and manfully attacked the shameless casuistry of the Jesuits. These letters *had* a wonderful efficiency, for their power was felt even by those who had no apprehension

* That exquisitely natural style, so identified with the writer's soul, that it may be characterised as Thought herself, robed in her own chaste nudity, like an antique statue.—FAUGER.

of the present subjects of controversy. Pascal gave such extracts from the approved writings of the order as filled men with amazement. At first he printed them without referring to the works cited: the Jesuits denied such abominable opinions to be maintained by their approved writers. Pascal then pointed out the places from which he had quoted. The discovery *ought* to have covered the Jesuits with confusion; but, by way of answer, they cried out that the writer of the letters was a *heretic*, and that a heretic must not be *believed*."

The epistles of Jacqueline more than once refer to the *Provincial Letters*. We may therefore conclude that the nuns were allowed to hear them, and perhaps for once, despite St Benedict, to indulge in the luxury of a hearty laugh.

Before we arrive at the period of the persecution and the stormy close of Jacqueline's life, several interesting letters demand attention. One is addressed to her nieces Jacqueline and Margaret Perier, then at Port Royal de Paris, and is believed by M. Cousin to be the only specimen of her handwriting now extant. He obtained it from M. Hecquet d'Orval, the descendant of M. Hecquet, a celebrated Jansenist physician of the seventeenth century:—

"To my dear sisters Marie Jacqueline and Margaret Euphémie Perier:—

" PORT ROYAL DES CHAMPS,
" February 10, 1660.

" **MY VERY DEAR NIECES**,—You have so much reason to complain of me that I cannot find any excuse for myself. It will therefore be a shorter way to ask the forgiveness which I doubt not you will grant; for if I were to bring forward some excuse that was not exactly true, I should both injure myself and set you a very bad example.

" I hope my delay in writing has not made you forget your promise to pray for me often, for you have been taught

too carefully to be capable of rendering evil for evil. For which reason, though you have cause to imagine I had forgotten you, I cannot think that you have wished to do the same by me. If you had, you would have done me a great injustice; for I can assure you, my dear sisters, that it seems to me as if I could forget myself ere I forget you, and the less I testify my love for you, the more I feel it. For, as love is a fire burning in the heart, it must of necessity be active, and when it has no outward vent, the flame is concentrated within, that is, provided weakness or dulness be not the occasion of its ceasing to appear outwardly. In that case the warmth unquestionably lessens as the flame goes down, like a fire which has no draught, and is suffered to go out for lack of fuel. But I feel as though I could unhesitatingly assure you that my love for you is not of this nature. It rather resembles a fire closely packed together, which diffuses all the more heat, because it does not waste its strength over a large surface. See, my dear sisters, how I have unconsciously allowed my pen to run on in assuring you how much I love you. I pray to our Lord that he may kindle his holy love in all our hearts, and make it the sole source of the love we feel for one another; for, without this, that love would only be a carnal friendship, and would not benefit us.

“ I know that you will try to love me in this way; but since I do not believe you are as yet sufficiently advanced to obtain from God whatever you ask, I entreat you to procure for me the prayers of my sister Flavia, whom you must assure of my regard, as well as those of your other mistresses, if our Mother is willing to allow you, and also to salute them from me. Good-bye, my dear sisters: I am entirely yours, in Him who is our All, and in whose presence we are nothing. Pray to him that I may be made worthy to pray for you.

“ S. J. DE ST EUPHEMIE,
“ *Rse. Ide. (religieuse indigne), an unworthy nun.*”

The sister Angélique de St Jean was about a year older than Jacqueline Pascal. Being a daughter of Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, and therefore niece to the Abbesses Angélique and Agnes, she was brought up under their care from early childhood. Her wonderful genius and penetrating intellect caused them often to recommend her to the prayers of their friends in these terms : "Ask that God may fill her with his Holy Spirit, for if she does not do good, she will do a great deal of harm. She took the veil at the age of seventeen, and became one of the brightest lights of Port Royal, being very pious and lowly-minded as well as intelligent. She seems to have possessed the true artistic temperament, evidenced both by her early skill in modelling, and the glowing, yet life-like, tone in which her contributions to the History of Port Royal are written. Her *Character of the Abbess Agnes* is almost a poem, and her own history was poetry in action. She stood foremost among those nuns whom the enraged Archbishop of Paris styled "pure as angels, yet proud as devils," and bore a long captivity with dauntless fortitude. Her Memoirs of the Persecution form one of the most touching chapters in the annals of feminine endurance for the sake of truth. After having been twice Abbess, she died in 1684, at the age of fifty-nine, from grief at the death of her cousin and spiritual guide, M. de Saci, whom she only survived three weeks.

In 1659 she was sent to Port Royal de Paris to fill the office of Sub-priress and Mistress of the Novices there, which was Jacqueline Pascal's post at Port Royal des Champs. During her absence, her younger sister, who had taken the veil under the name of Anne Marie de Sainte Eugénie, died, and Jacqueline on the same day despatched to Angélique de St Jean the following account of her last moments :—

"MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—You would have a right to complain of me, if I did not attempt to give you some comfort

in our mutual loss of that poor child. I hardly know anything that would pain me more than her past sufferings and the sad separation have done. Yet both are so mingled with consolation, that it is difficult to say which is the stronger and more justifiable feeling,—my grief for the loss of one who seemed nearer to me than if she had been a relative, or my joy and gratitude for the grace of God manifested towards one for whom I was bound to implore it. Her holy frame of mind was more especially displayed when her illness was at its height. It seems as if God had prolonged her life, against all likelihood, for the last week, only to shew us what his grace had effected. She did not really think that she should not recover, until two hours before her death, and this shews that her piety was genuine, and did not arise from a sense of immediate danger. For she expected to recover, though she did not desire it, and indeed rather wished for death than feared it, especially since M. Singlin's last visit.

“ The poor child, feeling very ill, went to the communion as a sick person, a little fearful how so violent an attack might terminate, but otherwise in a very happy frame, for it delighted her to think that her illness was sent as a chastisement; and her greatest alarm, next to the fear of death, was lest she might not be made better by it, or might not endure it with sufficient patience. God graciously removed from her afterwards all fear of death, and every reason for her other fears, for she was so gentle and good a patient, that all who attended on her were greatly edified.

“ And we may believe this to have been the work of grace rather than the effect of bodily weakness, because on Monday week I perceived that she had strong objections to swallowing a drink, which, to all appearance, was the only thing that kept her alive from that time until to-day, and that, while she drank water to quench her thirst very eagerly, she only took the medicine by drops. I said to her, very gently, that

since God had sent this illness as a chastisement, she ought to aid its effect by willingly submitting to all the remedies which necessarily accompanied it.

" This impressed her so forcibly, that ever afterwards she took whatever was offered her, and could not bear to have any one pity her, but would overcome the great pain it gave her to speak, in order to say that her sufferings were nothing, and not worthy to be compared with those of many other persons. She shewed to the last a deep gratitude for everything that was done for her, and her humility was such that she really felt herself to deserve nothing. She often complained that her weakness prevented her from praying to God ; and yesterday she asked me very earnestly if she ought not to repeat at least one of the daily prayers. I answered that her illness was sufficient excuse ; but she said, with a sigh, ' That would be true if I bore it properly, but I am so sinful ; ' and then she confessed some trifling impatience. I told her that the illness which produced these faults was their apology, and that, as to her devotions, she need only lift up her heart to God when she remembered it was prayer-time. This gave her peace, or, I should say, kept her in peace, for her peace, thank God, was uninterrupted.

" She confessed yesterday evening, but we did not think her so near her end. I believe that her mind was singularly collected during confession. The last time that she saw M. Singlin she spoke quite as freely and intelligently as she had ever done, and this morning she seemed so bright and talked so readily, that I was never more surprised than on hearing after mass that the death-rattle had begun. We hurried to her at once, and found her commencing the last agony, but so conscious, that I was terribly alarmed lest she should be troubled at the approach of death. But God was more gracious to her than I had dared to hope.

“ Neither the Mother Prioress nor I left her again, and it comforted her greatly when from time to time we repeated something to lift her thoughts to God. About noon, she turned to me, and knowing that I was grieved to see her suffer, she said, ‘ Your poor child is very sick.’ I answered, ‘ Yes, she suffers greatly,’ for she was shivering from head to foot. She replied, ‘ True, but it is nothing, if I could only hope to be pardoned.’ I tried to encourage her, and in a little while she said, ‘ What a comfort it is to die under your care !’ This convinced me that she was aware of her situation, and I told her that the Superior had gone to fetch M. de Saci. She seemed very glad, and soon after said, ‘ M. de Saci does not come ;’ then, correcting herself, she told us not to hurry him, lest it should be inconvenient. However, I sent for him again, seeing that she was rapidly sinking.

“ While they were gone for M. de Saci, she said, ‘ You had better begin the prayers,’ which I did. The poor child made all the responses, kissing the crucifix which she held. Her pulse grew stronger, and thinking that it might continue so, M. de Saci and the community retired. Then I asked her if she had not firm faith in God’s mercy. She replied with deep feeling, ‘ I do not know whether I am worthy to have faith in it.’ I told her that we could not trust his mercy too fully, because it is infinite. She understood me perfectly. Afterwards I asked if she were not very glad to die a nun, and she attempted to manifest her great gratitude for such favour. Shortly after, the Mother Prioress repeated a prayer, to which she listened attentively. Seeing her fail so fast, we thought she ought to receive the communion once more, though she had taken it and undergone extreme unction on the fourteenth day of her sickness. She shewed a strong desire to do so, and I believe her last words were on this subject ; for, immediately afterwards, while the room was being prepared, she was struck with death so suddenly, that

we had hardly time to call M. de Saci and the community, and they had but just entered the room, when her breath ceased so gently that we could scarcely perceive it.

“ These, dear sister, are great reasons for consolation, or they seem so to me. I have no time to add more, because the letters are called for.”—*From Port Royal des Champs, Oct. 7, 1660.*

CHAPTER VIII.

Persecution and Death.

THE last letters written by Jaqueline to her brother and Madame Perier are very cheerful in their tone, although, as we see, the multitude of her cares in the Noviciate had prevented her from wishing Pascal a happy new-year until November :—

“ November 16, 1660.

“ Good morning and a happy new-year to you, my dearest brother, for you will not doubt my having wished you this most cordially when the year began, though I could not tell you so until its close. I dare say you wonder at my mentioning it at all, but it is right that the wish should end where it began, and I assure you that my complete dedication of this year to God has not robbed you of anything you had reason to expect from me, for I have prayed for you continually. Oh, when I think how peacefully this season of separation, which we naturally expected would prove so painful, has passed away, and how swiftly this year has fled, time seems of such small importance that I cannot help longing for eternity ! But I am not going on with so extensive a train of thought, which I indeed commenced unintentionally. . . . To yourself I say nothing ; you ought to judge of my love by your own, and to be certain that I am entirely yours in Him who has united us more closely in the bonds of grace than in those of nature.”

Early in the following year she congratulated Mad. Perier on the youthful piety of her two daughters and her eldest son, Etienne Perier.* The latter was born at Rouen, and educated under the eye of his grandfather Pascal until the latter's death, when he was sent to school at Port Royal. Like the rest of the family, he shewed great precocity of intellect. Margaret Perier relates that when he was hardly five years old, and his mother was one day trying to teach him from the catechism that God is a Spirit, and has neither beginning nor end, he observed, "I can understand how God has no end, but not how it is that he never had a beginning." Madame Perier told him that it was nevertheless a truth which all persons were required to believe whether they understood it or not. "Will the saints understand it in heaven?" asked the child. She replied that in heaven the saints are to see God as he is, and to know him perfectly. "What a great reward!" was the answer of the infant metaphysician.

TO MADAME PERIER.

" PORT ROYAL DES CHAMPS,
" March 24, 1661.

" The retirement of this season of the year may prevent me from sending you a full letter, dear sister, but cannot excuse me from writing at all, because I have only to communicate what is holy, namely, the effects of God's mercy, of which we have already had an earnest. For you know that bodily healing is but an instalment of good, a token, so to speak,

* Etienne Perier did not ultimately fulfil the wishes and prayers of his aunt, by embracing a monastic life, although his piety was undoubted. Having been driven, together with their other pupils, from the schools of the recluses, when persecution broke these up, he afterwards turned his attention to mathematics and the bar, succeeded his father as Counsellor of the Court of Excise at Clermont, was married in 1678, and died two years afterwards.

He held all the opinions of his uncle Pascal, took an active part in the arrangement of the *Pensees*, and wrote the preface.

worth far more than it is in itself. This is beginning to prove true in a double sense, for while the wonderful miracle only cured one of your daughters, we have now reason to hope that both will be secured from the evil that is in the world. The elder has spoken admirably to M. de Rebours, and as for the younger, she is so devout, that if her state of mind continues, we shall not be able to help admitting her among the novices at an earlier age than usual, if, as I suppose, you and her father both intend to give her up to God. She says that her miracle is an especial privilege, and we can hardly avoid the same conclusion. And your eldest son, too, has been to see M. Singlin, and opened his mind to him, saying that he is quite disgusted with the world, and only desires to enter upon a religious life. M. Singlin did his best to try him, even telling him that his father was so excellent a man and so great a judge, that it was to be hoped he would follow in his steps, and that to dispense justice rightly was a service well-pleasing to God. But this consideration did not move him in the least then, and still less afterwards ; for M. Singlin, seeing him so firm, took his part, and encouraged him to the best of his ability in his design, which is very good. He means to live with M. de Tillemont* and M. du Fossé, who are two of the best people that can be found anywhere. M. Singlin ordered me to write you word of this, notwithstanding Lent, that you and his father may both rejoice and give thanks to God," &c.

While the arrows of the *Provincial Letters* were penetrating even to the remotest parts of the kingdom, and rousing all who had any ground of complaint against the Jesuits, to take part in the onset against them, headed by Pascal, the new Gideon, that knew not St Cyran ; while the provincial

* A good Jansenist, one of the greatest names among all the writers of ecclesiastical history, and of whose exact and profound remarks the infidel Gibbon makes large and constant use.

assemblies of clergymen originally convened in opposition to the "fait" of the five propositions, were openly censuring the Jesuit morality ; and while the disciples of Loyola had much ado to stand their ground in the provinces,—in Paris they were already meditating a decisive blow at Port Royal. The brief respite procured by the holy thorn expired with the death of Mazarin and the authority of Anne of Austria. The young king, Louis XIV., had been trained up in the abhorrence of Jansenism, and at his command a synod of French clergy drew up an anti-Jansenist test, to be taken by all ecclesiastics and communities, from which there was no escape. All were required, under penalties of extreme severity, to sign a declaration that the five heretical propositions were to be found in the book of Jansenius, with no exception on behalf of those who had never seen the volumes, or who could not read Latin.

The formulary ran thus :—

" I sincerely submit to the constitution of Pope Innocent X., of May 31, 1653, according to its true sense, as defined by the constitution of our holy Father, Pope Alexander VII., of October 16, 1656. I acknowledge myself bound in conscience to obey this constitution, and I condemn, from my heart, and with my mouth, the doctrine of the five propositions of Cornelius Jansenius, which are contained in the book entitled *Augustinus*, which both these popes and the bishops have condemned ; and this doctrine is not of St Augustine, which Jansenius has falsely set forth, but contrary to the true sense of the holy doctor."

It was of course impossible for the Port Royalists to sign such a document, and their crafty enemies, the Jesuits, were not likely to grant them any quarter.

" Persecution," says Tregelles, " now commenced in earnest. The dungeons of the Bastile were crowded with those who refused to violate their consciences by subscribing what they

did not believe. The very passages of the fortress were occupied by prisoners. M. de Saci, the nephew of the Mère Angélique, carried on during this imprisonment his well-known version of the Holy Scriptures. Henri Arnauld, Bishop of Anjou, and three other bishops, refused to accept the formulary, let the consequences be what they might. But it was upon Port Royal that the principal fury of the tempest discharged itself."

In April 1661, an order from the court enjoined the two recusant convents to send all their scholars and novices back to the families from whence they came. The Mère Angélique, then at an advanced age, and suffering from the disease (dropsy) of which she soon afterwards died, took a solemn farewell of the nuns at Port Royal des Champs, and removed to Paris, in order to be present at the dispersion, saying, as she stepped into the carriage, to her brother M. d'Andilly, who was standing by, "Farewell, brother, keep up a good heart, let what will happen." He answered, "Fear nothing, sister, I am full of courage." "Yet let us be humble," said she, "remembering that humility without firmness is cowardice, but courage without humility is presumption."

Terrible was the struggle of parting in both houses, although the Abbesses did all they could to inspire faith and fortitude in the hearts of their charge, and set an example of mingled courage and submission themselves. On her arrival in Paris, Angélique had the pain of seeing seventy-five scholars, novices, and postulants, removed by force from the shelter of Port Royal.

Jaqueline and Margaret Perier were sent to their mother, who was then living in the Rue St Etienne du Mont, Paris, and their aunt soon afterwards wrote them a letter of consolation and warning, advising them to retire as much as possible from society. "I do not," she says, "mean you to be discourteous, nor to seclude yourselves entirely, but to

seek retirement when not absolutely obliged to mingle in society, and when you are, to snatch a few moments frequently for communion with God."

The nuns were soon exposed to personal trials. One of the Grand Vicars of the Archbispopric of Paris was sent to Port Royal for the purpose of questioning them as to their belief. Jaqueline wrote down the details of her own examination, which were afterwards published in the *History of the Persecutions of the Port Royalist Nuns* :—

" After asking my name, and praising Saint Euphemia very highly, he (the Commissioner) inquired if I had not perceived a change in the doctrines inculcated in the convent since my residence there. I told him that I had not been an inmate very long, and could only say that nothing had been said to me on matters of faith which I had not learned in my childhood.

" *Question.* Did you, when a child, learn that Jesus Christ died for all men ?

" *Answer.* I do not recollect that it was so stated in my catechism.

" *Q.* Since your residence here, have you been taught anything on this subject ?

" *A.* No.

" *Q.* What is your own opinion ?

" *A.* I am not accustomed to dive into matters unconnected with duty, but it seems to me that we ought to believe that Christ died for all men, for I remember some lines in a volume of devotion, which I owned before I took the veil, and have kept ever since, where, addressing our Saviour, it says : ' For the salvation of all men, thou didst humble thyself to be born of a virgin.'

" He smiled a little at this, and said, ' Very good ; but how comes it then that so many are lost eternally ? '

" *A.* I confess to you, sir, that this thought often troubles

me, and when I am praying, especially if kneeling before a crucifix, and it recurs to me, I cannot help saying internally to our Lord, 'O my God ! how can it be, after all thou hast done for us, that so many souls should miserably perish ?' But when these thoughts come, I repress them, not daring to pry into the secrets of God, and I find satisfaction in praying for sinners. He replied : 'That is quite right, my daughter. What books do you read ?'

" *A.* At present, St Basil on Morality, which has lately been translated, but more often my rule (the rule of St Benedict).

" *Q.* How are you occupied ?

" *A.* Before the novices and candidates for the veil were removed, I took the charge of those who were here. But now the number is limited to a few nuns, a novice, and some lay sisters.

" *Q.* It was a hard trial for you when the novices were removed, was it not ? In answer to this, I enlarged considerably, not shewing any resentment, but dwelling on the grief they felt, and the dangers to which they were exposed in the world. This seemed to touch him also, and then he said : 'Do you teach your novices that Christ died for all men, and the reason why some men are holy and others wicked ?'

" *A.* As I avoid puzzling myself with these topics, it is not likely that I should seek to puzzle them. On the contrary, I try to have them as simple-minded as possible. He answered : 'That is right. And do you teach them that they alone are to blame when they do wrong ? Or do you not believe this yourself ?'

" *A.* Yes, sir ; and I know it by my own experience. I assure you that when I commit a fault, I blame no one but myself, and for this reason I endeavour to repent and atone for it. He said, 'You are right, and God be praised for it. I believe you are speaking to me in all sincerity ?'

“ *A.* Yea, sir, as in the sight of God.

“ He added : ‘ I believe you, and God’s name be praised that it is so. My daughter, always maintain this belief, whatever you may hear, and teach it to the novices. I thank God with my whole heart for having kept you from error ; for it is really horrible that any man should be found to teach that God draws some from the corrupt mass, and leaves others to perish as it pleases him. It is horrible. God be praised that you have not fallen into this great error. Have you no complaints to make ? ’

“ *A.* No, sir ; by God’s grace, I am quite contented. He said, ‘ That is wonderful ; I sometimes meet with nuns who keep me two whole hours listening to their complainings, but I find nothing of the sort here.’

“ *A.* It is true, sir, that by the grace of God we do live in great peace and harmony. I think it is because each one does her own duty, not meddling with that of others. He exclaimed, ‘ Ah, that is indeed a blessing, God be praised for it, my daughter. Send me the sister next in order to yourself.’ ”

“ Every effort that could be devised was put forth to make the nuns sign the formulary. How could they be so obstinate in their own opinions—to the matter in question—whether certain propositions are in a book or not—such that it should be treated as one of great importance ? Why should such a point be made about upholding the writings and opinions of one man ?

“ The replies to these considerations were simple and easy. It was not the *magnitude* of the point at issue, but its *truth*, that gave it its importance. They did not *believe* the propositions were in Jansenius, they could not therefore declare them to be there : they did not believe that Jansenius had misrepresented St Augustine, nor could they on such grounds say that he had done so. And as to *maintaining* one person’s

opinions, they could only say that they had not raised the controversy, but those who had impugned Jansenius. As to themselves personally, the nuns stated that the work of Jansenius being in Latin, they could not declare on oath what its contents might be, for they had not even read it ; they knew, however, that no one had pointed out the propositions, as condemned, in the work itself." *

Meanwhile, Arnauld and the other men of note belonging to the Jansenist party held many consultations on the best method of evading the snare so craftily laid for them by the Jesuits. Their dilemma was cruelly painful. If, by signing the formulary, they asserted that the five propositions were in the *Augustinus*, they would be guilty of falsehood ; and, on the other hand, if they refused to sign, the destruction of the convents was inevitable, and the helpless nuns must become the first victims.

The suggestion of a compromise was, therefore, eagerly caught at, and a treaty with the Archbishopsric of Paris began, for the purpose of obtaining a modified declaration (*mandement*) that might be subscribed without the signers becoming guilty of high treason against conscience. Many were the outlines of the desired compact between sincerity and prudence, and great was the division of opinion between the Jansenist leaders on the propriety of signing at all.

Arnauld and Nicole, for the sake of the nuns, were in favour of a signature to be given with certain reservations, but Pascal, though confined to his bed by illness, had already made his election, and determined at all hazards to abide by the truth. He felt convinced that the Pope, by condemning the work of Jansenius, not only proved that he misunderstood its meaning, but virtually condemned the doctrines of

* The Jansenists: their Rise and Sufferings. A Chapter in Church History. By S. P. Tregelles, LL.D. London : 1851.

justification by faith and salvation by grace, which the apostles taught, and for which the primitive Church and St Augustine had contended. It grieved him, he said, to find himself in a strait between God and the Pope, but he could not sanction the sacrifice of truth to expediency, knowing such a course to be wrong, and believing it to be useless. Arnauld and Nicole urged that it was disrespectful to the Pope and the Bishops to assert that they had condemned the doctrines of grace, as well as prejudicial to the doctrines themselves to have it generally known that they were given up by the great mass of ecclesiastics in authority, and only defended by a small clique. But Pascal was stubborn in his unconscious Protestantism, and would not admit any consideration as superior to the duty of maintaining God's truth against all odds. He did not object, however, to the nuns signing the modified formulary, provided they made a distinct exception in favour of the meaning of Jansenius, and of the doctrines of grace. The last conference was held in his chamber, when the majority of those present, yielding to the influence of Arnauld and Nicole, voted for the signature. "Seeing which," says Margaret Perier, "M. Pascal, who loved truth more than all things else, and who, in spite of his weakness, had spoken with great earnestness in order to impress his own convictions upon the others, was so overcome with grief that he became suddenly faint, and lost both voice and consciousness." Great astonishment ensued, and remedies were eagerly applied, after which the gentlemen all went away, except M. de Roannez and M. Domat* (Pascal's most intimate friends), and Etienne Perier. When Pascal had quite recovered his senses, Madame Perier asked him what had occasioned the swoon. He replied: "When I beheld so many persons to whom I believe that God has made

* One of the most eminent of the French writers on the civil law, and a firm Jansenist.

known his truth, and who ought to be its defenders, thus giving way, I confess to you, such a feeling of distress came over me, that I could not bear it, nor keep myself from fainting."

In this conjuncture, Jaqueline Pascal manifested the same intrepid and fiery disposition as her brother. Indeed, the women of Port Royal, as a general thing, displayed more decision and courage than its men. Witness the expressions with which Angélique, though bowed under the weight of age and infirmity, sustained the drooping spirits of the desolate nuns—"What! do I see you in tears, my children? What do those tears mean? Have you no faith? Are you afraid of the wrath of men? They are but flies who spread their wings and make a little noise. You hope in God, how then can you be alarmed? Believe me, if we fear him, all will go well;”—or her reply to the Duchess de Luynes, who was congratulating her on the possession of so much courage—"Madame, so long as God continues to be God, I shall hope in him and not be afraid." Public and private seasons of special prayer were of course appointed in both convents, and it was with the utmost reluctance that the nuns at length submitted to the decision of their confessors, and signed the qualified declaration. The Prioress of Port Royal des Champs, Marie de Ste Madeline Dufargis, and the Sub-prioress, Jaqueline Pascal, refused for a long time to sign. "Jaqueline, strange to say, though not aware of what had passed in the meetings held at Paris, used the same arguments, and even some of the same words, which Pascal had done. She could not understand, any more than he, how men, claiming to be the defenders of the truth, could possibly abandon it on any consideration of expediency. Her intrepid heart, brought face to face with danger, broke forth in proud yet pathetic strains, which remind us of some of the finest passages in the *Provincial Letters*. We ask,"

says M. Cousin, "of all who yet retain any sympathy with energy of character, and with the beauty of an unselfish love for truth, if they have ever met with many pages of greater sublimity and strength than these which we are about to lay before them." In June 1661, Jaqueline addressed the following letter to the Mère Angélique de Saint Jean. It was afterwards inserted in the *History of the Persecutions of the Port Royal Nuns* :—

" PORT ROYAL DES CHAMPS,
" June 25, 1661.

" MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—The little notice that has hitherto been taken of our scruples in regard to giving our assent to the treaty now under deliberation, would prevent me from recapitulating them now, since they seem to be thought of such slight importance, did the thing admit of delay. I think it, however, my duty to tell you that the difficulties stated by me in writing to our Mother, referred only to the 'Mandement,' a copy of which, by a most singular chance, fell into our hands. Had our anxieties been at all regarded, or had our remonstrances produced any effect, I should say it had been sent to us by the providence of God.

" The feelings of the entire sisterhood upon this subject are now unanimous. Yet we distinctly understand the pretence that the requisition of our signatures only binds us to submission to the Church, that is, to silence on matters of fact, and belief in matters of faith. But the time for this has gone by. Most of us heartily wish that something worse had been demanded (knowing that, in the times wherein we live, it were vain to hope for anything better), because, if it were worse, we should all feel at full liberty to reject it; while, as it is, many will be almost constrained to accept it, and false prudence or real cowardice will cause many others to embrace it as an easy mode of procuring safety for the conscience, and for the body as well. But for my own part,

I am convinced that in such a course there can be safety neither for body nor soul. Truth is the only real Liberator, and she makes none free but those who strike off her own fetters—who bear witness to her with a fidelity that entitles them to be acknowledged as the true children of God the True.

“ I cannot any longer conceal the regret which rives my very soul when I see the only persons to whom God has committed his own truth so unfaithful to it, and, if I may be allowed the term, destitute of the courage necessary to brave suffering and even death by its open confession.

“ I am well aware of the reverence that is due to the authorities of the Church. I would gladly lay down my life in order to preserve that reverence inviolate, just as in the present juncture I am prepared, by God’s help, to die for the confession of my faith ; but it seems to me that nothing can be easier than to unite the two. What is to prevent us—what is to prevent every ecclesiastic cognisant of the truth, from answering, when the formulary is presented for signature, ‘ I know that I am bound to respect their lordships the Bishops, but my conscience does not allow me to subscribe the statement that anything is contained in a book which I cannot discover in that book,’ and then quietly to await the result ? What are we afraid of ? Banishment and dispersion for the nuns, the seizure of property, prison, death if you will,—but are not these things our glory, and ought we not therein to rejoice ?

“ Let us either give up the Gospel, or let us carry out its principles, and esteem ourselves happy in suffering for the truth’s sake. But we may perhaps be cast out from the Church ! True, and yet who does not know that no one can be really detached from the Church except by his own will ? The spirit of Jesus Christ is the tie that binds his members to himself and to one another, and though the outward signs

of that union may be taken from us, its effect cannot be taken so long as we retain the spirit of love, without which no one is a living member of that holy body. Is it not plain, therefore, so long as we do not erect altar against altar, while we are not wretched enough to form a schismatic church, and while we continue within the limits of simple remonstrance, and meek endurance of persecution, that the charity which leads us to love our enemies must of necessity attach us to the Church by inviolable bonds? Our enemies alone will have excommunicated themselves, since the divisions they are trying to produce do but sever the bond of charity which once united them to Jesus Christ, and rendered them members of his body. Alas! my dear sister, what joy ought we not to feel, if we are permitted to endure some special reproach for Christ's sake! But there is too much pains taken to prevent this, when truth is so skilfully painted with the colours of falsehood that she cannot be recognised, and the most keen-sighted can with difficulty detect her.

" Yet I admire the ingenuity of the human mind, as displayed in the perfection with which the 'Mandement' is drawn up. It must be a rare thing, I should think, to find a piece of writing composed with equal art and skill. Had it been the work of a heretic, I should consider it worthy of high praise for its adroitness in evading punishment without recanting error; just as the head of a family might not be able to help marvelling at the ingenuity with which his steward had cheated him, by tacitly consenting to a falsehood, although he may not have actually told one. But for the faithful—for persons who know and maintain truth—for members of the Catholic Church, to stoop to such disguises, and to play fast and loose!

" I cannot believe that such a thing was ever thought of in primitive ages, and I pray God this day rather to strike us all dead than to suffer such an abomination to be intro-

duced into the Church ! I find it difficult, dear sister, I assure you, to believe that this sort of wisdom comes from the Father of lights, for it seems far more like a revelation of flesh and blood.

“ Forgive me, my dear sister, I beg. I speak in the agony of a grief which I am certain will kill me, unless I have the consolation of seeing that some are willing to come forward as martyrs for the faith, to protest either by refusal or by flight against the acts of others, and to become themselves champions of the truth. Not that I am desirous that any uncalled-for declaration should be made, especially at the present time, when the enemies of truth are so envenomed and powerful. By the way, you are doubtless aware that the condemnation of a holy bishop (Jansenius) is by no means the only question in debate. His condemnation includes that of the doctrine of our Saviour's grace. If, therefore, our age be so degenerate that none are found willing to die in defence of a righteous man, is it not far more dreadful to think that no one is disposed to suffer for the sake of righteousness itself ?

“ However, I do not wish for any one to make a public profession of faith ; for, unquestionably, in the present state of affairs, yes and of persons also, whom God has left to become the slaves of their own will and passions, nothing short of a miracle could save the truth from condemnation. And the more clearly we explained that truth, the more occasion of sin should we furnish to those who are obstinately bent on condemning it. But what I do desire is, that while strictly observing all proper deference towards the powers that be, and making neither accusations nor reproaches, there should at the same time be a firm determination of giving no reason to believe that the truth itself has been condemned, or even evaded. For I ask you, dear sister, in God's name, to tell me what difference you can find between these evasions and

the offering of incense to an idol, as defended by the pretext of having meanwhile a crucifix hidden in one's sleeve.*

" You will perhaps say that this does not concern us, because of our own private formulary. But I have two things to say on that head. One is, that St Bernard teaches us, in his admirable manner, that the most insignificant member of the Church not only may, but *ought* to cry aloud and spare not, when he sees the bishops and pastors of the Church in such a state as we behold them now. Who, says he, can blame me for calling out, though I am but a feeble sheep, if I try to awaken my shepherd when I see him asleep, and on the point of being devoured by a wild beast ? Even were I so ungrateful as not to do this out of love and gratitude, ought not a sense of my own peril to prompt my utmost efforts to arouse him ? For who is to defend me when my pastor is devoured ? I do not say this in reference to our own spiritual fathers and friends ; I know that they themselves detest every species of duplicity quite as much as I do, but I say it in reference to the general condition of the Church, and to justify the deep interest I take in this matter, both to you and to myself.

" My other answer is, that hitherto I have not been able to give my thorough approval to your formulary as it is. I should like to have a change made in two places. The first at the beginning, because it seems hard for persons like us to offer so freely to give account of our faith. I would do this, however, with a little preamble, explaining away the consequences and the unseemliness of such a confession ; for there is no question but that this whole affair of the required Signature and Declaration of faith is a usurpation of power,

* See the fifth Provincial Letter. Jacqueline here resorts upon the Jansenists the reproach which Pascal addressed to the Jesuits for having allowed the Christian converts in India and China to pay outward homage to idols, provided that they referred that worship mentally to an image of Jesus Christ hidden under their clothes.

which brings very dangerous consequences in its train, more especially as it is demanded by authority of the king. Now I do not consider that private individuals ought to resist that authority, but neither ought they to yield to it without some intimations that they do so, not out of ignorance, or because it is their duty, but as submitting to endure wrong rather than occasion scandal. The second is towards the close, where I would rather not mention the decisions of the Vatican ; for though it is true that we submit to those decisions in matters of faith, yet the vulgar confound fact and right by reason of ignorance, and interested persons choose to confound them by reason of self-will, and thus they are looked upon as one and the same thing. What effect, then, would your formulary produce, except to make ignorance believe and malice assert that we have agreed to everything, and that we condemn the doctrines of Jansenius, for these are plainly censured in the last bull ?

“ I know very well that the defence of truth is not women’s business, though, in a melancholy sense, it may be affirmed that when bishops seem to have the cowardice of women, women ought to have the boldness of bishops. And if we are not to be defenders of the truth, we can at least die for it, and suffer everything rather than abandon it.

“ A comparison occurs to me, which may serve to illustrate my idea upon the decisions of the Holy See. Though every one knows that the mystery of the Trinity is one of the prominent articles of our faith, which St Augustine would unquestionably confess and willingly sign, nevertheless if his native country were in possession of a pagan prince, who wished to have the unity of God denied, and a plurality of deities acknowledged, and supposing that some of the Christians, in order to quiet the commotions excited by such a proceeding, were to compile a formulary of faith on the subject, running thus—‘ I believe that there are several per-

sons to whom we may give the name of God, and address our prayers'—without any further explanation, would St Augustine sign it? Assuredly I do not believe he would. Still less do I think he *ought* to sign it, though the truth be one which no true believer would doubt,—but which no true believer ought to acknowledge at such a time, nor in such a way. You can easily make the application. It may be said that our authority is not of the same weight as St Augustine's, and that, in fact, it is of no weight at all. To this I answer, in the first place, that I have only mentioned St Augustine by way of reference to the reply given by you a few days ago, when I stated my difficulties, which was, that our fears would only be laughed at, and that St Augustine would sign the paper that we were so much afraid of. But what I say of St Augustine, I say also of you and of myself, and of the least important in the Church; for the febleness of our influence does not lessen our guilt, if we use that influence against the truth. Every one knows, and M. de St Cyran says it in a thousand places, that the least truth of religion ought to be as faithfully defended as Christ himself. Where is the Christian who would not abhor himself, if it were possible for him to have been present in Pilate's council, and if, when the question of condemning our Saviour to death arose, he had been content with an ambiguous way of stating his opinion, so that he might appear to agree with those who condemned his Master, though his words, in their literal meaning, and according to his own conscience, tended to an acquittal?

"Is not the sin of St Peter trivial in comparison of so extreme a timidity, and yet how did he regard that sin through his whole after life? And we are also to note well, that though destined to become the head of the Church, he was not its head then. So that his was only the sin of a private believer, who did not say, as in the present case, 'This man

is a sinner, he is worthy of death, crucify him,' who did not even pretend to say it. What he said was, simply, 'I know not the man.' Follow this comparison to its last results, I beseech you.

" My letter is only too long already. This, dear sister, is what I think about the formulary. I see clearly that it need not contain a full confession of faith, but I should like to have what it does contain, clearly and distinctly expressed. For, ignorant as we are, all that we can reasonably be required to sign is a testimonial to the sincerity of our belief, and to our perfect submission to the Church, to the Pope as its supreme head, and to the Archbishop of Paris as our superior, stating that, although we do not consider it right to demand an account of their faith in this matter from persons who never gave any occasion for that faith to be called in question, nevertheless, in order to avoid the scandal and the suspicions to which our refusal might give birth, we do hereby testify, that, esteeming nothing so precious as the treasure of a pure and unadulterated faith, and willing to yield our lives for its preservation, we desire to live and die as humble daughters of the Catholic Church, believing whatever she believes, and ready at all times to die in defence of her least important truths. If they are satisfied with this, well and good ; if not, for my part I shall never sign any other, if it please God. This is all that I think we ought to concede, let what will happen. Poverty, dispersion, imprisonment, death,—all these seem as nothing to me compared with the anguish of my whole future life, if I should be wretched enough to make a league with death, instead of profiting by such an opportunity of paying to God the vows of fidelity which my lips have pronounced.

" Let us pray to God for one another, my dear sister, that he would more and more strengthen us and make us humble, since humility without fortitude, and courage without hu-

mility, are equally pernicious. Now, more than ever, we should recollect that the fearful have their place with the perjured and the abominable.

“ Do not be shocked at my complaints that so little notice has been taken of our scruples. This gave me no trouble whatever. I am used to be treated as a child, and God grant that it may be so always. But the subject led me thither undesignedly, and I do not regret it, because if similar circumstances should ever occur again, it will be known that we are not to be satisfied with the assurance that our scruples are ridiculous, while no reasons are assigned. Farewell, dear sister. In the condition of our beloved invalid, if the thing were not so pressing, I should not have written a word on the subject.

“ I believe, my dear sister, that it is needless for me to say I make no objection whatever to the *words* of your formulæ, and that I do not care what terms are used, provided no reason be given to think that we censure either the grace of Jesus Christ or him who has so well explained its doctrines.

“ Therefore, in adopting the words, ‘Believe all that the Church believes,’ I have omitted ‘and condemn whatever she condemns;’ though I do in reality condemn what the Church condemns, but I do not believe it a fitting time to say so, lest the Church should be confounded with the present decisions. Even as M. de St Cyran says, that the pagans having placed an idol on the very spot where once stood the cross of our Lord, the Christians would not go thither to worship, lest it should be supposed that they were worshipping the idol.”

Jaqueline, on reflection, thought it would be more honourable as well as truthful to send this letter to M. Arnauld himself, hoping, as the *History of the Persecution* informs us,

that he would not feel hurt at the severe terms in which she had expressed herself, although her remarks touched him more nearly than they did any one else. She therefore enclosed her letter on the formulary in another which ran as follows:—

"At Evn, June 23, 1661.

" **MY FATHER**,—The ordinary rules of politeness would require of me many compliments, and the expression of much delight at having an opportunity of writing you, since, as you are aware, it is so rare a pleasure; but in truth the state of the Church and of our dear Mother deprives me of the heart to attempt such civilities. And, besides, my father, I should be very unjust to your kindness did I imagine that you could think it possible for my regard for you to vary. The command you have sent us in the note received this morning, gives me a suitable occasion of doing something to which I have hitherto been prompted only by internal desire, which is not always a safe guide. Yesterday, my father, after having received the communion with a very sad heart, on account of what has transpired, I felt, while returning thanks, or rather while sighing out my soul before God, a strong desire to write down all my thoughts on the matter, or at least the chief of them, for many quires of paper would not contain the whole. Not knowing whom to address, I be-thought myself of sister Angélique, and to her I at once indited this long letter, first invoking God and his Holy Spirit on behalf of the persons who should answer it, and afterwards writing what I had to say without premeditation, as fast as my pen would move. Your note of to-day enabled me to finish it with more courage, and I send it to you as it is, my father, because I cannot find time to write it over again, and address it to yourself.

" You will see that it is written with a margin. If you will have the kindness to answer each paragraph upon that

margin. I shall feel greatly obliged; but if you prefer : write a separate answer, and if you think fit, after reading : yourself, to send it to Sister Angélique, I will inform her that I have asked you so to do. If, however, you write your answers upon the letter itself, please to send it direct to me for I only wish her to have it in case no one else replies to it so that she may herself answer it. And whether your response is written on the letter itself or separately, I will, with your permission, send it to her, but I should be very glad to see it beforehand. You will perceive, my father, that I have felt and expressed no little indignation at the proceedings, for it appeared to me that, apart from the rights which each one has to take his own view of things, and sustain it with what reasons he can, it was my privilege to speak with more freedom than others, on account of one* who is so much concerned in the matter. I am beyond measure delighted with his zeal, and I cannot but think that it is the work of God's Spirit inspiring him to do that which will relieve the consciences of a large number of persons, who would otherwise suffer themselves to be led as sheep to the slaughter. For in times like these, when it were useless to hope that those in authority over the Church at Paris would be courageous enough to set an example of martyrdom to their diocese, it was worthy the piety of some to devise a way, almost unconsciously to most of their number, whereby it became possible to avoid doing anything in opposition to the truth. They have acted like a wise father who blunts the edge of the knife before giving it to his child. In short, to express my idea in one word, the evil that might have been done is prevented; and this is no slight praise, since the Church itself applies it to the saints, who might have sinned and they sinned not. But it does appear to me, my

* Doubtless meaning her brother Pascal.

father, that what suffices for some would be a terrible falling short in others. It is all very well to have things arranged as they now are, provided that persons possessing more courage are permitted to go further, and provided that it is not pretended we are to be saved by concealing the truth, and being satisfied with not openly *censuring* it, although we do *apparently* censure it. Truly, my father, this seems like an imitation of those who say that we are not obliged to love God, and it is enough if we do not hate him. But if I begin to argue again, it will be difficult for me to stop. Forgive me, therefore, my father, and do not imagine, I beg, that though I seem courageous, nature does not dread the consequences,—but I trust that grace will support me, and indeed I almost seem to feel its power even now. I entreat you most humbly, my father, to implore this grace on my behalf. I trust these letters entirely to your discretion. I had rather no one should see them but yourself and Sister Angélique. However, if you think proper to shew them to M. de Gournay, you can do it. My sister also could see them, and perhaps my brother, if his health is good. I ask you, my father, to pray for me, in the name of God."

The increasing illness of the Abbess Angélique exempted her from the necessity of signing. She made, however, one more effort in behalf of Port Royal, by addressing a long and eloquent letter of remonstrance to the queen. This was the last act of her eventful life. After several weeks of severe bodily and mental anguish, unsoothed by the presence of those men of God who had for years been her spiritual guides, she expired on the 6th of August 1661, aged seventy. Among her last words were these:—"O Jesus! thou art my God, thou art my righteousness, thou art my strength, thou art my all!"

The Prioress of Port Royal des Champs, Madame Dufargis

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CHAPTER IX.

The Survivors.

MADAME PERIER, in her life of Pascal, informs us how he received the news of Jacqueline's death. "She was assuredly the being most dear to him on earth; yet when he heard the tidings he merely said, 'God give us grace to die as well!' And he ever afterwards maintained the same admirable spirit of resignation to the appointments of Divine Providence, his reflections on my sister's death being confined to the great mercies vouchsafed to her by God during her lifetime, and the peculiar circumstances under which she died. When thinking of the latter, he often exclaimed, 'Blessed are the dead, provided they die in the Lord!' and when he saw me in continual sorrow over a loss that I felt so keenly, he was displeased, and told me that it was not right."

The melancholy temperament of Pascal, and the austerities to which, under the influence of a perverted view of life common among members of the Romish communion, he addicted himself in his later years, give him a place among the most ingenious of self-tormentors. Many of the learned and pious men of his age, as well as others less distinguished, were accustomed to consult him on matters of importance. His prompt discernment and habit of patient attention made him always a safe and often a successful counsellor. But it was his custom to wear a girdle of iron beneath his

Esquisses, better used to the sacrifice of even innocent enjoyment, told her sister that she was mistaken, for Blaize loved her dearly, and would take every opportunity of proving by his deeds the affection that he thought it wrong to express in words: "which, indeed," says Madame Perier, "he did not fail to do." One of Pascal's Perier gives some explanation of his conduct:—

"It is not right for any one to be fond of me (quid
attrahit a me), even though that fondness be voluntary and
delightful. I should disappoint those in whom I might call
forth affection, because I am finite, and have therefore no
power to satisfy them. Am I not liable at any moment to

death? And then the object of their attachment will be dead. As I should be culpable if I were to persuade others of a falsehood, although my manner might be gentle, and the belief of that untruth might afford them pleasure, so also should I be guilty of a great wrong if I were to attract the regard of my friends, and cause them to idolise me. Rather let me undeceive those who are ready to believe what is false, and teach others that they ought not to attach themselves to me, since their lives should be spent in communion with God and endeavours to please him."

To return to Port Royal, where Jaqueline was sincerely lamented as one "whose eminent piety equalled the sublimity of her intellect, and who was in all respects a perfect Nun,"*—M. Singlin, on the day succeeding that of her decease, addressed the following letter to the community, from his place of concealment:—

" It would be very difficult for me to say nothing to you on a matter which you, my sister Angélique de St Jean, all who knew her whom you have lost, and the entire sisterhood, feel so deeply. My own grief is solely on your account, since on hers we ought to rejoice, and as to myself, I dare not grieve. She had, as you know, great confidence in me, and I always fear for those who have. And when God takes them hence in so happy and holy a frame of mind as was hers, I have reason to praise him, and therefore to rejoice. My only sorrow is because I know there is a void in your house which it is impossible to fill. Yet nothing is impossible with God. Who can tell what is needful for us better than he? For some days past I have been struck with the thought of what an impertinence it is for us to desire one thing, or to be afraid of another, to wish that this or that

* See Lives of the Nuns of Port Royal.

may or may not happen, that certain persons may live, or others die! as if God, in his sovereign wisdom and equity, did not behold all things, and we were possessed of some peculiar light or discernment without which he could not in perfect righteousness order and govern our affairs. He understands so well what is within and around him, that we have only to bow down before events which seem to us mysterious, because we cannot trace in them the wonderful harmony that is really displayed in all things, even in the lives and actions of wicked men, and which glorified spirits continually admire and adore. This thought often stops me when I am about to wish that God would or would not do anything. The death of the righteous or of the wicked, the prosperity or destruction of the best designs for his own service, as well as the surrender of our whole being, to be disposed of as he shall see fit, are all involved in this one consideration. We, therefore, ought only to implore that his holy will may be done in all things, to consult him in order to know that will, and to submit to every event, for fear of placing our own will and plans above his. They are happiest who suffer and bow down before him at all times, and under all circumstances of affliction as well as gladness, knowing that in our imaginations and ignorance we frequently think that evil which in reality is good."

As to the family, the Abbess Agnes undertook to write to Pascal, and the Mère Angélique de St Jean to Madame Perier. These two, next to the Abbess Angélique, had been Jacqueline's most intimate friends at Port Royal, and knew her best.

From the Mère Angélique de St Jean to Madame Perier :—

" I have no words as yet, my very dear sister, in which to commune with you of our mutual loss. Truly your note of

yesterday gave my heart a pang, as unlooked for as the feeling of hopelessness with which I this morning waited for the intelligence that crowns all our past afflictions was bitter. I have just seen M. Perier, to whom I only dared mention what he had already learnt from your note of yesterday morning, because Hilary had told me that such was your wish. He seems so grieved, that I pity him for the sadder news he has yet to learn, since the too strong hopes which he still persists in half-flattering himself, will only serve to make the blow more severe. He had not spoken to M. Pascal. M. de Roannez* is here, and I am very glad he is; yet in such trials, if consolation come not from God, and from faith in him, it is quite impossible to obtain it from any earthly source. Alas! I say this as I feel it, only too sadly, for I had hoped great things in all our present and future trials from her whom God has taken away, lest we should lean on her too much. Let his name be for ever praised for all his mercies! He has good reasons for all his doings; and they all tend to the good of his chosen ones, who are bound to adore his decrees without attempting to penetrate his designs. I cannot tell you, my very dear sister, how much I sympathise with your grief, nor yet how much more than ever I feel myself drawn and bound to you by this sad separation."

From the Abbess Catherine Agnes de St Paul, to M. Pascal :—

"October 7, 1661.

"SIR,—Although condolence is usually an intrusion on great afflictions like yours, yet I promise myself that you will receive this note as a mark of the respect which leads me to offer you my most humble sympathy in a trial which you

* Pascal's intimate friend.

cannot but believe that I deeply feel; the loss being common to us both, and, if I dare to say so, even worse for those who had to pass their lives with that dear sister. Our late Mother (Angélique) would have greatly regretted her death, but now she has doubtless greeted her with joy, because her thoughts are no longer our thoughts, and she views our interests in a different light from that in which she beheld them while with us on the earth. Thus, too, the dear sister whom we are now mourning cannot grieve over our bereavement; since her sole desire for us is, that we may lose sight of self, and be completely swallowed up in God's will, as she herself now is. The gospel appointed for the day of her death points out our duty on this occasion and on all others, which to the eye of sense seems so temporary, especially when the sacrifice of our most legitimate affections is demanded. Jesus Christ therein sets us the example of consenting to whatever God does, because it seems good in his sight. This is all that we have now to say, except that, by way of return for the deep love borne to us by the dear departed, we are bound to give God thanks, with her, and for her, since he so taught her to comprehend the mystery of our Saviour's humiliation, and imparted to her such grace, that, although by nature wise and prudent, she was enabled to renounce all the advantages with which he had endowed her, and to take always the lowest place, far beneath others less acquainted with God and their own hearts than she.

" You knew her worth, sir, much better than we did, and so sincere a Christian as you are will give her up to God as a voluntary offering. It is true, as you are aware, that God lays upon us the necessity of submission, in order that we may not be able to evade the accomplishment of his designs. I entreat of him, sir, that he would give you all the grace he now expects you to manifest, and help me to plead for you in his presence as you deserve, both on account of your own

past kindness to me, and for the sake of her who was so near and dear to us both.

“ I remain, sir, your very humble and obedient servant in Jesus Christ,

“ SISTER CATHERINE AGNES DE SAINT PAUL,
“ *An unworthy nun.*”

A short sketch of the fortunes of the Pascal family after Jacqueline's death, may not be uninteresting to the reader.

Blaise Pascal only survived his sister a few months. He died August 19, 1662, aged thirty-nine, worn out with that disease of the head of which his unremitting studies had early laid the foundation. He endured all his pains with exemplary patience, saying that suffering was the natural state of Christians, and that he was ashamed of having so much kindness and attention lavished upon him, while many of Christ's poor members had not where to lay the head. It was even his wish to be carried to an hospital and left to die among the poor; and when his physicians and confessor positively forbade this, he could only be quieted by the promise that some poor stricken creature should be brought to the house where he lay, and receive the same attendance as he did. He died in full communion with the Church of Rome, although, had he lived, it is doubtful whether so independent and Bible-loving a Christian could have long remained unmolested within her pale. Ten years after, his brother-in-law, M. Perier,* died suddenly, at the age of sixty-seven. His death plunged Madame Perier into a sea of pecuniary embarrassments, rendered all the more painful from the fact, that her husband's generous and indulgent disposition had been taken undue advantage of by those he had befriended, who, instead of aiding her, did all they could to increase her

* An interesting account of M. Perier will be found in the next chapter, written by the well-known theologian, M. Vinet.

perplexities. See my, in certain letters to one of her friends :—

“ M. de Retzergues can tell you something about the horrible difficulties into which the attempt to settle my affairs has thrown me. At first, I hoped that after one year I should be extricated, but three years have now gone by, and I find new vexations continually arising. I really think that the success of one rogue encourages others, for all with whom I have to do cheat me in the most barefaced way, and what makes this the more galling is, that it has all occurred in consequence of M. Perier's good-nature, and the extreme leniency he always shewed to those indebted to him. Indeed, sir, it would be impossible to tell you all I have to go through ; but we must submit to God's will. It is not our province to select the sufferings by which he intends to try us. Pray for me, I entreat you, that this trial may be the means of my sanctification, for you can have no idea how painful it is.”

Her correspondent probably resided at Clermont, since in the next epistle she goes on to say :—

“ Your letter made my heart thrill, sir, when I read in it that I had friends in the faubourg. The very thought of having friends is pleasant to me, for in the place where I now live I have none. I meet with much respect and esteem, and have a great many visitors at all times ; but as for real assistance, counsel, or consolation under my pecuniary trials, much as I need them, and fully as every one is convinced of the injustice done me, there is none to be had. People look on with indifference, and I confess to you that I feel this indifference keenly. It is certainly a great mistake to suppose that I am at all attached to my present resi-

dence ; on the contrary, I seem as it were bound here with iron chains, and the constraint I suffer is at times indescribable. When I say that I have no friends here, I do not mean that I have enemies ; far from it. I meet with innumerable polite attentions, but the very atmosphere of the place (Paris) inclines people to be civil to others, yet to take no active interest in any affairs that are not their own. If I were moving in worldly society I should have help and support enough, but as it is, no one has any personal concern in my affairs, and therefore no one cares much about them. I believe you know me well enough to be certain that this sort of life by no means pleases me, and I own to you that it makes me feel very sad, especially as I try to hide most of my feelings from my children, who would be quite overwhelmed if they had any idea of what I suffer. For which reason I do not wish you to take any notice of what I now write in your next letter, lest they should perceive that I had been complaining."

In another letter she enters more into particulars, which serve to shew that the lot of the widow and orphan of the seventeenth century was no more exempt from other burdens beside bereavement than it is at the present day :—

" You do not know the trouble we have in taking care of our property. We have sold my husband's office for next to nothing, because it was a continual source of annoyance, and while deriving no benefit from it, we had to expend money in order to retain it. I wish I could have found some one who, for the sake of a large share of the property, would have looked well after it,—to whom I might have relinquished my own unquestionable rights with safety, and thus have freed my sons from the trouble and anxiety they now have, as well as the waste of time which, in my opinion,

might be better employed. Day after day it is necessary to carry on lawsuits, and examine into the value of property : but I hope that God will provide, and of his great mercy bring us sooner and more safely through than now seems likely."

Etienne Perier, Madame Perier's eldest son, died in 1680, and her youngest, Blaise Perier, in 1684. She herself died in 1687, being in her sixty-eighth year, and was buried in the church of St Etienne du Mont, Paris, by the side of Pascal. Nine years afterwards, her eldest daughter, Jacqueline, expired at Clermont. She was educated at Port Royal, and would have taken the veil there but for the dispersion of the novices in 1661. There had been a question of her marriage when about the age of fifteen, but Pascal interfered to break it off, and the young lady herself preferred a cloistered life. It was on this occasion that Pascal wrote the often-quoted passage : " Marriage is the lowest and most dangerous grade of Christianity ; because, though husbands may be thought rich and wise by the world, they are often absolute heathens in the sight of God, and to engage a child to a man of the ordinary stamp, is a sort of homicide, and as it were a deicide in her person." Jacqueline Perier led a very secluded life, busied herself with reading and prayer, and endured a complication of diseases. " Her temper," says her sister Margaret, " was very serious, and even rather peculiar."

The Memoirs of this same Margaret, the heroine of the Holy Thorn, close as follows :—

" My brother, Louis Perier, was the last of our family but me. He was born September 27, 1651. In early childhood he displayed a merry, frolicksome disposition, and made fun

of whatever any one tried to teach him, so that at seven years old he could hardly say his Paternoster. In 1658, my mother took him to Paris, and told my uncle that she could teach him nothing. My uncle (Pascal) then took charge of his education, and the child soon became very grave, but the frequent illnesses to which he was subject prevented him from getting on with his studies till he was between ten and eleven, when, his health being re-established, he diligently improved the good instruction he received from an excellent tutor.* He was successively Dean of St Peter's College, and Canon of Clermont Cathedral. Having always led a very canonical life, and been intensely devoted to his studies, he was in both capacities 'a sweet savour of Jesus Christ.' He left his beautiful seat of *Bien Assis*, a little way out of the town, to come and inhabit two small houses near the churches where he officiated, and afterwards sold it to one of his relations. He died October 13, 1713, and was buried in the cathedral.

" Such was the life of all the members of my family. I am left alone. They all died in an immovable love for the truth. I may say, as did Simon Maccabæus, the last of all his brothers : ' All my relatives and brethren have died in God's service, and in the love of his truth ; I am left alone ; and God forbid that I should ever think of renouncing either ! ' "

The following memoranda concerning Margaret Perier are found on certain manuscript copies of her Memoirs :—

" Mademoiselle Perier died yesterday, April 14, 1733, at ten o'clock P.M., aged eighty-seven years and nine days.

" She told me that when her mother died she was forty-

* M. de Rebergue.

she was growing with increased energy, and today
she is now fit and well in most of a恢复
about her own service to the church. They are
engaged, and she expected herself that her brother is
able to reside at the hospital, where however her health
which was much impaired, did not permit her to make a
long stay. She went back to live with her brother
who had been named Canon of the Cathedral; they
bought a house in its neighbourhood, and both lived
there in a very simple manner. Mademoiselle Perier
was always dressed in black, of the commonest materials;

their furniture was perfectly plain, and their only domestics were a valet who took care of their country property, and two or three maids, who, like their master and mistress, lived a religious life. They did not wear black veils, but little white hoods. One of them, whom she had brought from Paris, and who survived her, had been in her service fifty years.

“ Some years before her death Mademoiselle Perier lost the use of her limbs, which compelled her to remain within doors, except on festival days and Sundays, when she was carried to the cathedral in a chair, that she might hear mass and perform her devotions there. She usually passed the day upon a couch, and occupied herself with prayer and reading, scarcely ever seeing any but pious persons, who were always charmed with her conversation. Her mind and memory, which was excellent, endured to the very last ; and by her will she made the poor people in the General Hospital of Clermont her legatees. It may be said of her, that she ‘died in a good old age, being full of days.’ ”

After having traced the history of Jacqueline Pascal, M. Victor Cousin proceeds to sum up her character and that of her brother, and to offer some general remarks on Jansenism. His position, however, as a leader of the Eclectic school of philosophy in France, the fundamental principles of which, as its name implies, is an endeavour to blend certain features of various and widely differing systems of philosophy into one harmonious whole, renders him in some respects incapable of sympathising with the religious convictions of Pascal and his sister, even while doing justice to their natural genius and heroic resolve. M. Cousin, though a nominal Catholic, is more allied to rationalism than to Romanism, “ for the ligament that binds him to Rome is dry as summer-dust ; it has no life-blood, and hardly a nerve.” And on the other

hand, the very points of belief which make Pascal so dear to the hearts of evangelical Christians—for which he unflinchingly contended and his sister died—are those that strike M. Cousin as erroneous and fanatical. The austerities with which brother and sister, in common with other Jansenists, overlaid the foundations of their faith, may well be characterised as superfluous and often absurd ; but however disproportioned might be the edifice, beneath it lay the sure corner-stone, whereon whosoever buildeth, be he Lutheran or Calvinist, Protestant or Romanist, Jansenist or even monk, shall never be ashamed.

The lamented Vinet, for so many years one of the noblest lights of Swiss Protestantism, was deeply interested in the writings of Pascal, and made them the subject of several sets of lectures to his theological class. A translation of one of these lectures, which reviewed the works of M. Cousin and M. Faugère on Jaqueline Pascal, has been substituted for the concluding remarks of the former, as giving a more candid and discriminating view of the characters of Blaise and Jaqueline, and of the principles which governed Port Royal. It will be found on the next page.

CHAPTER X.

Jacqueline Pastal.

AN ESSAY BY THE LATE M. VINET, OF LAUSANNE.

IN the modern programme of human life and social progress, the virtue of obedience is a mere blank. We can hardly account for the preservation of the word, unless by supposing it to have acquired a new or improper meaning. Men do not always act as they themselves choose ;—they are not always able to carry into effect their entire will ;—they often act under the influence of the will of others. In this respect there is no change ; and the quality of obedience is still in existence, if to obey mean nothing more than to yield. But where is the real principle of obedience ? Who is there now-a-days that looks upon obedience as a duty ? It may, in a certain sense, be said to have vanished from the present generation. Some have even declared that this loss is of no advantage to the cause of freedom, since liberty—true and useful liberty—depends upon obedience, and always exists in proportion to it ; the principle of both, in the depths of man's soul, being one and the same, and the two currents springing, so to speak, from but one source.

This consideration enables us to gauge the moral decadence of our times. Obedience is rapidly departing, and she leads her sister Freedom by the hand. They are not yet out of

sight, thank God, but he who would overtake them must make haste, for their majestic forms are even now half hidden behind the horizon.

It is a truth proved by both experience and common sense, that without religion there can be no true obedience. For religion is obedience ; it contains the only principle of obedience ; and all that remains of the latter, in either a world or a heart whence religion has departed, is but the lingering trace of God's old empire over conscience, the ruined fragment of an impulse, once mighty, but now exhausted.

Amidst the too general forgetfulness of this rule, and the failure of this power, it is pleasant to discover in the past, and still more so to meet in the present, examples of this virtue of obedience, be they illustrious or be they obscure. Such instances are more particularly attractive when they display the spirit of obedience at its fountain-head, and in its first, its highest, its most reasonable exercise. The satisfaction we take in them is but slightly impaired by a few aberrations, more or less grave, which, however, leave the principle intact. It is refreshing to catch a glimpse of human beings absorbed by one sole thought—that of self-consecration to God—and more jealous in regard to the minutest thing appertaining to him than the most consummate miser is of his wealth, or the most avaricious despot of his power. Such a contemplation lifts the soul, at least for a moment, to its full height, and gives it a vivid, though, perhaps, a fleeting conviction of its unchangeable destiny and its most important relations.

Of this nature is the impression made on us by every instance of earnest piety,—we mean, of piety steeped in obedience. This, more especially, is the great benefit derivable from those accomplished teachers in the study of spiritual life, the men and women of Port Royal. Perhaps, among them all, not one has this characteristic of obedience more

strongly marked than the lowly-minded nun whose memory has been almost simultaneously revived by both M. Cousin and M. Faugère.

In most of the other Port Royalists, the habit of command was fused with that of obedience ; and although the very exercise of authority was a proof of obedience on their part, yet in their history, pure submission, to a casual observer, is less strikingly displayed. But Jaqueline Pascal is submission personified ; with her, obedience is everything. The vast powers of mind, the remnant of freedom yet left her, and the energy of her will, being all unreservedly devoted to God, and knowing no will but his, the degree of authority which afterwards devolved upon her did but cause this one master-trait of her character and life-obedience to become more and more distinct and dominant. This volume (for, with the exception of a few discrepancies to be noticed hereafter, it is but one work, published by two editors) was needed in order to complete our acquaintance with that great school of Christianity to which the author of the *Provincial Letters* belonged, and which had its full development, its culminating point, in Port Royal. The doctrinal works produced by that school, and the grand outlines of its history, do not tell us all. Details and accidental occurrences are a far better revelation of its daily thoughts, its temper, its very life. No one ever thought of doubting that this body of Christians was thoroughly in earnest ; but in order to learn how far they carried their earnestness, and how consistent, even to an extreme, were the dwellers in those Alpine heights of Catholicism, we must listen at their doors. And this we have an opportunity of doing in the perusal of the *Life and Correspondence of Jaqueline Pascal*.

And, in sooth, it is not Jaqueline alone, but all the members of her noble family, who stand before us, each in turn. It is possible that in the history of certain races there may

occur an illustrious moment, a unique moment, in which the type of that race, after long elaboration, attains its distinct degree of energy and perfection, sets its distinct and deep imprint on two or three medals, and then is broken for ever. It was so in the case of Blaise and Jacqueline—two precious vases, shattered by the mighty workings of truth, genius, and feeling within them. The covering was too frail to resist the internal pressure, and perhaps if stronger it might have fared no better. Blaise died at the age of thirty-nine ; Jacqueline three years younger. But this brief space sufficed them to set the world a noble, an imperishable example.

We experience a feeling of more thorough and respectful admiration for her than for him. We doubt whether we have ever met with a character, male or even female, which surpassed Jacqueline's. Had she been a woman endowed with one of those peaceful and innately submissive natures, to which the conviction of duty brings repose, we should not say this. But the history of Pascal's sister displays a struggle and a victory of the most arduous kind, yet at the same time complete in its results. We ask ourselves whether, with a disposition like hers, an obedience so exact might not have been produced by her turning all the passion that would else have found another vent, in the direction of obedience. Passion, however, is insubordinate, and if induced to obey at all, its obedience cannot fail of becoming overstrained. Not thus did Pascal's sister obey. That subtle method of effecting her own will, spoken of by the prophet, did not characterise her. She did not disobey by the sheer force of her excessive obedience. No ; she obeyed peacefully, holily, exactly, and yet with energy ; in short, she was *obedient*, and we cannot express the gracefulness (we must be allowed to use this word) with which, on certain occasions, she manifests a power of language that incon-

testibly proves her by nature born to command, and shews that she could have exercised her birthright with incomparable vigour, if divine grace had not endowed her with the better heritage of obedience.

And yet she is a woman, and nothing allows us to forget this ; she never forgets it herself. None of her sex ever had a more masculine character. Madame Roland could have taught her nothing. Her thoughts are as manly as is her character, and yet we are never tempted to say that she oversteps the boundaries of her sex. No, she does not overstep them ; all her strength is penetrated by a womanly tenderness and grace. In reading her life and letters, we recollect the beautiful words addressed by a modern writer to the prince of poets,—

“ And still thou wert a man,
We feel it by thy tears.”

We feel also by her tears, or perhaps by something more affecting than even tears, that the sister of Pascal, who might indeed be called his mother, was, in the very depths of her nature, a woman. She is more womanly than any one of the energetic women held up to our just veneration in the history of the Church and the world. Her life is the life of a woman of energy ; her death—that of a woman. She died of grief, because, under the guidance of her brother, of the great Arnauld, and of the distinguished members of Port Royal, she had consented to a transaction esteemed proper by them all, but in which the exquisite delicacy of her moral sense detected a slight evasion. How much mingled strength and weakness in such a death ! Yet it was not the Christian, but the woman who sank, overwhelmed by the weight of her own courage. That sorrow, that death, that tender and yet mighty soul, what a subject would they not afford to the poet who could so gently win us to mingle our own tears

with those of Racine, and who long ago penetrated into the hidden life of Port Royal !

To understand the extent and value of the sacrifices made by Jacqueline when she renounced the world and self for ever, it is necessary, after reading the *Regulations for Children*, to take up her letter to Mother Angélique de St Jean upon the signing of the Formulary. With M. Cousin, we ask all who yet retain any sympathy for energy of character, and for the beauty of a disinterested love for truth, if they are acquainted with many pages of more vigour and excellence. But what we wish more especially to remark, is the authority, let us dare to say the *pride* of language, which Jacqueline never allowed herself to use in relation to her own affairs, and of which she would always have been thought incapable, if the imperilment of truth had not caused her to quit the precincts of her inviolable reserve. Under favour of this unlooked-for opening, nature escapes, her native character for a moment re-asserts its rights, and the pride of the Pascal heart fully reveals itself in the words, " I know that it is not for women to defend the truth ; but in the present unhappy juncture may it not be said that when bishops have the cowardice of women, women ought to have the courage of bishops ? " Such a nature as hers, long buried amid the shades of idleness, illness, or devotion, is awakened, like the Great Condé* by a battle of Seneff ; but an opportunity was

* CONDÉ.—Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, born in 1621, known in history as the Great Condé, defeated the Spaniards at the battle of Rocroy, when only twenty-one years old. He persisted in carrying out his own plans of attack against the advice of older generals, and thereby succeeded in crushing the Spanish infantry, till then deemed invulnerable. Such was the pride of these old bands, celebrated all over Europe, that a French officer having the next day asked a Spaniard what were their numbers before the battle—" You have only," replied he, " to count the dead and the prisoners." The military reputation of the young conqueror was at once established by this victory.

Condé was afterwards opposed to the court party in the war of the Fronde ; was arrested and imprisoned, together with some of his relatives, by order of Mazarin. He only regained his freedom through the heroic efforts of his wife, Claire Cle-

requisite, and without it we should have had neither waking nor discovery, for it is not the fate of every gallant spirit to begin its career with a Rocroy, that shall at once put its greatness beyond the pale of doubt for ever. What was Jaqueline Pascal's Rocroy ? An internal victory witnessed by God alone, and owing more than half its grandeur to the clouds in which it is enshrouded. To annihilate self, and then to efface the most minute traces of that very annihilation, had been the task of this heroic girl for years. She had deemed it her especial duty to mortify her noble intellect, but she was unable to destroy it ; it still clung to her ; and though everything which she achieved or wrote bears the stamp of mental superiority, there is nothing comparable in this respect to the Letter on the Formulary. Closeness, sagacity, vigour of argument, energy of language, every ingredient of eloquence is there, and stands out in fine relief from an admirable background of humility.

From this scene of agitation, on which her appearance is brief and scarcely discernible, we gladly follow Pascal's sister into her daily sphere of thought and action. It is a world even more extraordinary than the situation in which we have just admired her. This world beyond the world, is not merely the convent, but a group of individuals and of families, a distinct part of French society at that epoch. mence de Maillé, a niece of Cardinal Richelieu, yet he repaid her devotion with neglect and ingratitude. After the final defeat of the Frondeurs, he took refuge with Spain, and turned his sword against France ; but was at length pardoned and restored to the royal favour.

In 1674 he fought in the battle of Seneff, on the Flemish frontier, against the Prince of Orange, afterwards William III. of England, remaining, though in feeble health, seventeen hours in the saddle. In this bloody contest, 27,000 men were left dead on the field. Both sides claimed the victory ; and when Condé, on his return to Paris, went to Versailles, Louis XIV. advanced to meet him as far as the great staircase. The Prince, who had nearly lost the use of his limbs from gout, was ascending it very slowly : "Sire," exclaimed he from a distance, "I crave your Majesty's pardon if I keep you waiting." "My cousin," replied the king, "do not hurry yourself ; when one is so laden with laurels, one can hardly walk fast."—*Lord Mahon's Life of Condé*, pp. 14-25, 282.

It is that portion of the Catholic Church on which the name of a man or of a book was afterwards imposed, but which in reality did not originate with either man or book ; it is, so to speak, a spiritual and ascetic school, disowned by Catholicism, yet obstinately refusing to retaliate that disavowal. The life of Jacqueline Pascal, the memoirs of her sister and niece, enable us to enter that school, and make us quite as familiar with it, as do the devout writings of the Nicoles, the St Cyrans, the Quesnels, and the Dugneta. We learn not only what was thought, but what was practised, within that little Church, born of the Spirit. Can it be true that it is not possible for men to examine themselves and to watch over their daily lives without exaggeration ? and is this tendency to extremes the weakness of the strong ? Many facts, individual and collective, seem to rise up and testify that thus it is. And among their number is the asceticism of that religious school to which the sisters of Pascal and Pascal himself belonged. No other band of Christians has more loudly professed or more sincerely practised the voluntary and deliberate yielding of the creature's will to that of the Creator. No other has felt a deeper repentance and horror of sin. It seems, in these pious and vigorous minds, as if there was a struggle between love of God and hatred of self, and though we cannot without injustice say that the latter prevailed over the former, yet we may reasonably conclude that the latter—self-abhorrence—is the peculiar tone of Jansenist piety. It would appear that, according to their idea, God was not sufficiently avenged, and that the Christian, though hopeless of completing that vengeance (mark this point), was yet bound to carry it on and to attempt its consummation. If life was in itself a punishment, they must try to aggravate it, and, if not, they must make it become such. The apostolic maxim, “Use the world as not abusing it,” will not satisfy the members of this school, for their device is,

"Use it not at all." Too spiritually-minded not to be aware that it is useless to renounce the world unless self be first crucified, they do not admit of the one renunciation without the other, and the life of the believer must become, in every sense, a long adieu to life. St Paul, while duly honouring Christian celibacy, had pronounced marriage honourable in all, but Pascal declares it "the most perilous and the lowest of Christian stations," and on this ground alone dissuades one of his nieces from marrying. His brother-in-law, M. Perier, always wore a girdle lined with iron points, but his humility always kept this fact a secret. He used also to have a plank in his bed, which he always made himself, in order to prevent its discovery. Mental enjoyment was looked upon by some of these Christians as a different kind of sensuality or luxury, and they rigorously declined it, as a superfluity, only permissible to persons who had no taste for it. To sum all up in a word, they have no tie to earth nor to its inhabitants, save charity. This one cable fastens them to its shore, but all the rest are cut. In their eyes, every one belongs to the world who lives in it, no matter how genuine, humble, or practical his piety; and to quit the world entirely, is the true, the only conversion. A single aim, a single thought, a single work—such is the rule, and such the spirit of Port Royalist piety. And if you would gain a clear yet freezing intuition of that mode of life, you have only to read, in *Jaqueline Pascal*, the sketch of the little girls' education who were committed to her care. The recital of one day's occupations will excite your reverence, and at the same time make you shudder.

M. Cousin has made some very just remarks on this head, which we have no desire to gainsay. Rather would we say, in addition, that what is imperfect as a model, may be perfect as a type. We think it a matter of congratulation that such examples have come down to us in spite of all their short-

comings and excesses. And as far as we ourselves are concerned, evil is less apparent than good, and falsehood than truth, throughout the whole. Whatever may be said to the contrary, truth and excellence are in the ascendant. If mankind must of necessity be self-deceivers, this mode of self-deception is the best ; and if it be the occasion of scandal, the blame rests not so much with them as with their accusers. For the life of the recluses of Port Royal vividly represents, in spite of some confusion in the metaphor, the true relations of man, the true emotions caused by repentance, and the true dignity and beauty of human existence. I should not speak thus did I perceive in the asceticism of Port Royal those two errors of which I agree that asceticism is, by turns, both the cause and the effect. I mean a mercenary spirit, and that fatal prejudice which places the principal of sin in matter, or in the flesh. Nothing of the kind is here to be found. Jansenism may have neared the brink of that abyss, but it never began the descent. Its piety was altogether spiritual, actual, and sincere. It had no toleration for sublime phantasies ; the virtues it practised were useful and salutary ; it aimed at justice and charity in its relations with mankind ; and its morality is no exact, ingenious mechanism, but a living, pliant reality. In a word, these extraordinary beings were only, in their daily life, devoted friends to God and to their neighbour.

Having mentioned M. Perier's austerities, I should like to shew his character in a different light. The following trait will, I doubt not, make up for the girdle and the wooden couch. I leave his daughter, Marguerite Perier, to narrate it :—

“ Two days before his death he performed an action worthy of record. There lived at Clermont a treasurer of the French Government, whose family was considerably

indebted to M. Perier, and my father, knowing this debt to be nearly outlawed, wished to take some steps to secure his own rights. He therefore called upon the treasurer, and requested him not to take it amiss if he did so. The man behaved in a very improper manner, and made the most bitter and abusive complaints of my father in company. My father was told of this, but only said, 'One must make allowances for a man whose affairs are deranged.' About a week after, there came news from Paris that every treasurer would be obliged to pay a tax of ten thousand francs, or otherwise must lose his office. My father told my mother of this, and said, 'That man will be ruined. I should like to offer him some money.' My mother said, 'Do just as you please, only recollect what a sum is already due you from that family.' He made no answer, but went on the morrow to the treasurer, and asked him if he had heard the news, and what were his intentions. 'I shall be obliged to resign my office,' replied the treasurer, 'for it is very plain that I cannot raise ten thousand francs.' My father said, 'No, sir, you will not resign it. I have ten thousand francs. I will lend them to you.' The man was so astonished, that he sobbed out, 'You must certainly be a true Christian, sir, for I have said very harsh things of you, and I know that you have heard of them.' My father did not mention this. It took place on Monday, February 21, and on Wednesday, the 23d, he died suddenly at seven in the morning. The treasurer, hearing of his death, ran to the house, shrieking, weeping, and exclaiming, 'I have lost a father!' and then he related the conversation of the Monday previous."

No one can fail to remark the almost biblical simplicity of this narrative. What I wish to point out in it, is the extreme moderation and reserve of its style. This is the characteristic of that piety. Towards God alone it flows out

freely. On every other subject it is incommunicative, and this habit once formed, there is no longer anything to impart—the barrier is never threatened, either by the dearest interests or the most profound emotions. This devout and holy sobriety in the expression of natural feeling is not merely a discipline worthy of being reverenced for its motive, it is a judicious and salutary economy. The expression of feeling always weakens that feeling. Never, without an evident and an impracticable miracle, can the words of the poet respecting a magic cup be spoken of the soul :—

“ And still the more the vase pour’d forth,
The more it seem’d to hold.”

Every vase is emptied by the act of pouring, and, up to a certain point, that which is true of a vase is no less true of a heart. The soul has its excesses, and is weakened by them, just as excesses of another kind weaken the body. Reserved men, when that reserve is not the mask of sterility, preserve their strength of soul just as temperate men preserve their bodily vigour. Nay, this very reserve is usually a pledge and a foundation of mental strength. And what we have said of individuals is equally true of epochs and of literatures ; for in these also, when the sap runs out, the tree is weakened. Were all this denied, it would still be undeniable that nothing moves us so deeply as a single word from the heart of one whose words are, from a sense of duty, few. We are affected both by what he says and what he leaves unsaid. When Margaret Perier concludes the memoirs of her family with these simple words—“ Such was the manner of life of all my relatives. I am left alone. They all died in an unchangeable love to the truth : God forbid that I should ever think of deserting it !”—the heart is stirred to its profoundest depths, and we feel grateful that she inclined the vase so slightly.

In giving an account, last year, of Pascal's system of theology, which seems to us more mild than any other system, we excepted the inhumanity of a part of his morality, essentially the same as that of Jaqueline and of Port Royal. And having made this exception, we may be allowed to say that the natural affections were deeply rooted in those noble hearts that made the love of God a foundation for every other love. Ah, yes! it is true there is something heart-rending in the particular regulation whereby Jaqueline forbids poor little girls, brought up together, to interchange the slightest caress or even touch; and we will allow those who confess that such severity is in principle sublime, to condemn it as excessive. But where must be the eyes of those who can read the Regulations, and not discover them to be full of the most considerate tenderness, and that they dictate attentions of the most delicate charity? Who could read, I do not say without respect, but without tears, Jaqueline's narrative of the difficulties attending her entrance on a religious life, especially from her brother and her family. The letter on the Formulary is not more admirable of its kind than this, and the one shews up the value of the other. Not wishing, nor indeed able, to dwell upon it as a whole, let us quote a single sentence. Speaking of the "disingenuous reasons" (*raisons de chicane*) by which the relatives of Jaqueline opposed her intention of offering to the community of Port Royal the just and customary remuneration for the expenses of her maintenance, "I know," she says, "that these arguments were true in the main, but they were such as we had never been accustomed to use with one another." Never was complaint more reserved, more tender, nor, for that very reason, more sorrowful. But this long letter ought to be read, for its very length, occasioned by holy veneration and gratitude, completes the picture of Port Royal, and it is, moreover, in some places, full of a

solemn grace. The form of Christianity which we are now studying is there in its richest bloom, and with the full fragrance of its refreshing perfume.

We attempt, with a painful sense of our own incompetency, to supply that which, without contesting their correctness, seems to us wanting in the moral reflections of M. Cousin. When he seeks to discover for the nineteenth century a middle path between the sublime but extravagant devotion of the seventeenth and the liberal but impious philosophy of the eighteenth, he perhaps does not wish to keep us equidistant from the two ; but it seems as if he did. The devotion of the seventeenth century is not sublime merely. It is true to its heart's core ; and if it were not true, it would not be sublime. Allowing that it gives too much scope to error, even upon points that M. Cousin could not indicate, its truth, we repeat, is far greater than its falsehood. Among the multitude of religious revivals whose memory is recorded in ecclesiastical history, this is assuredly one of the loveliest. In saying this, we yield to the wish of giving expression to a truth which we deeply feel, and to which M. Cousin has not accorded the aid or the homage of his eloquence. But it was not necessary ; M. Faugère had preceded us. We find at the close of his preface this passage, excellent both in thought and style :—

“ This zeal, it is true, was not always so enlightened as it was fervent and sincere. They (the Jansenists) not unseldom pursued the principles and practices of religion beyond the bounds of reason, forgetting that man's proper destiny upon earth is to unite the life of action to the life of contemplation ; that the duty of a sincere Christian does not consist in sacrificing the one to the other, but in regulating the one by the other, and uniting both in that just proportion, the quest of which is the quest of perfection. But all passions, even those

of the purest kind, are liable to excess, and it is better to respect an exaggerated virtue, than to set about the easy task of discovering its absurdities, for the mere sake of enjoying an idle pleasure in triumphing over them. Men's hearts are not apt to incline so far heavenward as to place morality in any danger on that score. And, besides, is it not in the order of Providence, that certain towering intellects should, in all ages, devote themselves to the worship of truth, of beauty, of holiness, of an ideal perfection? Yes, and it is good that they should do this, in order to remind humanity of the origin of all its dignity and moral grandeur, and, as the sceptic philosopher Bayle expressed it, 'to prevent the spirit of the world from ostracising that of the gospel.'

The two works which we are now reviewing are similar, and yet different. They relate to the same subject, and are, for the most part, composed of the same materials. Madame Perier's sketch of her sister Jaqueline, the latter's poetry, her rules for the management of the young girls educated at Port Royal, her *Reflections on the Mystery of Jesus Christ's Death*, her examination, and her letters, are given in full in both volumes. Now, let us look at their differences. M. Cousin does not make his appearance as an editor alone. His work, though much of it consists of Jaqueline Pascal's writings, is none the less a book written upon that admirable woman; — a book in which the citations are like facts or articles of proof, framed in some of the finest and most glowing pages which we have ever obtained from M. Cousin's eloquent pen. The publication of M. Faugère is a complete collection of the writings of three female members of Pascal's family, viz., his two sisters Gilberte and Jaqueline, and his niece Margaret Perier. This noble volume is a natural and indispensable companion to M. Faugère's edition of *Pascal's Thoughts*. His own part in it consists of a preface, well worth

reading, a large number of notes, and, in particular, the exact restoration of the text. This restoration, the importance of which is more than merely bibliographic, is by no means the sole advantage distinguishing this edition. It is more rich and ample than M. Cousin's, who, in fact, only set out to write a book on Jacqueline Pascal, and has, as usual, written it well. M. Faugère's volume contains many long pieces, we might call them entire works, from which M. Cousin simply extracts a few pages, the plan of his work not including their complete republication.* In saying that Madame Perier's *Life of Pascal* (52 pages), and the *Memoirs of Margaret Perier* concerning her family (about 50 pages), are the principal though not the only pieces which M. Faugère has introduced into his enlarged frame, and M. Cousin has left out, we note one of the peculiar merits of the former's work. But, in strict justice, we ought to add that the illustrious academician's book has in it certain other pieces, hitherto inedited, though of no very great value or length. Madame Perier's *Life of Pascal* has more than once been prefixed to his *Thoughts*, yet many of his admirers are still unacquainted with that fine fragment, and its reprint by M. Faugère is a true boon to the public. Nor do we think that the *Memoirs of Margaret Perier* will be greeted with less pleasure. For, apart from her belonging to the Pascal race (which is a self-evident, indisputable fact), her sketches are intrinsically curious and useful. They let in new light upon a state of society and manners of which it is impossible to form a correct idea from the general outlines of history. We always find, in evil, as well as in good, some facts which never could be taken for granted. Who, for instance, could be prepared

* In the present volume an attempt has been made to blend what was most interesting in the works both of M. Cousin and M. Faugère with the information requisite to make them intelligible to persons not familiar with that period of French history to which they refer.

to see the pious and learned Etienne Pascal, the father of Blaise, giving ear to a witch, and following, in some respects, her advice?* Parental love caused him to listen to counsels, which, in truth, he never sought. But the same depth of affection would not be likely now-a-days to lead many persons

* Margaret Perier thus relates the episode of Pascal's infancy to which M. Vinet here refers: "When my uncle was a year old, something very marvellous happened to him. My grandmother, though quite young, was very pious and charitable, and there was a great number of poor families whom she was accustomed to relieve. Among them was a woman generally believed to be a witch, but my grandmother, who was very intelligent and by no means superstitious, laughed at the warnings she received, and continued to give the woman alms. Her little boy about that time fell into a state of languor resembling consumption, but attended, however, with two very unusual symptoms. He could not endure the sight of water without falling into violent convulsions, and what was even more astonishing, neither could he bear to see his father and mother draw near each other. He would seem pleased when one or the other caressed him separately, but they no sooner approached him together than he began to cry and struggle with frantic vehemence. This malady increased for more than a year, and at length became so severe that his life was despaired of.

"Every one told my grandfather and his wife that this witch had certainly cast a spell over the child, but the idea only amused them, for they supposed it to be pure imagination on the part of their friends, who could find no other way of accounting for the child's illness, and paid no attention to it, allowing the woman free admission to their house, and relieving her wants. My grandfather, however, grew tired of hearing so much said on the subject, and one day sent for the woman into his room, intending to talk to her in a manner that would make her put a stop to the reports. She answered him at first very mildly, saying that they were all false, and only arose from envy at the kindness shewn her. He then pretended to be very angry, and to believe that she really had bewitched his child, and he threatened to have her hanged if she did not confess the truth. Upon this she became alarmed, and, falling on her knees, promised to acknowledge all, if he would only agree to save her life. My grandfather, very much astonished, demanded what she had been doing, and what were her motives. She answered that she had once asked him to conduct a lawsuit for her, and he had refused, on the ground that he did not consider her claim a just one, that therefore she had thrown a spell over his child by way of revenge, knowing how tenderly he loved it, and that she was sorry to tell him the sickness was unto death. My grandfather exclaimed in sorrow, 'What! must my child die?' She told him there was a remedy, but it was necessary that another should take his place, and become a victim to the enchantment. My grandfather said, 'Oh, I had rather my son died than to have any one killed in his stead.' She said that the enchantment could be laid upon an animal. My grandfather then offered to give her a horse, but she said that a cat would answer the purpose, and be less costly; so he gave her one, and she carried it off; but as she went down-stairs two Capuchin friars met her, who had called to condole with my grandfather upon his son's illness. They told the

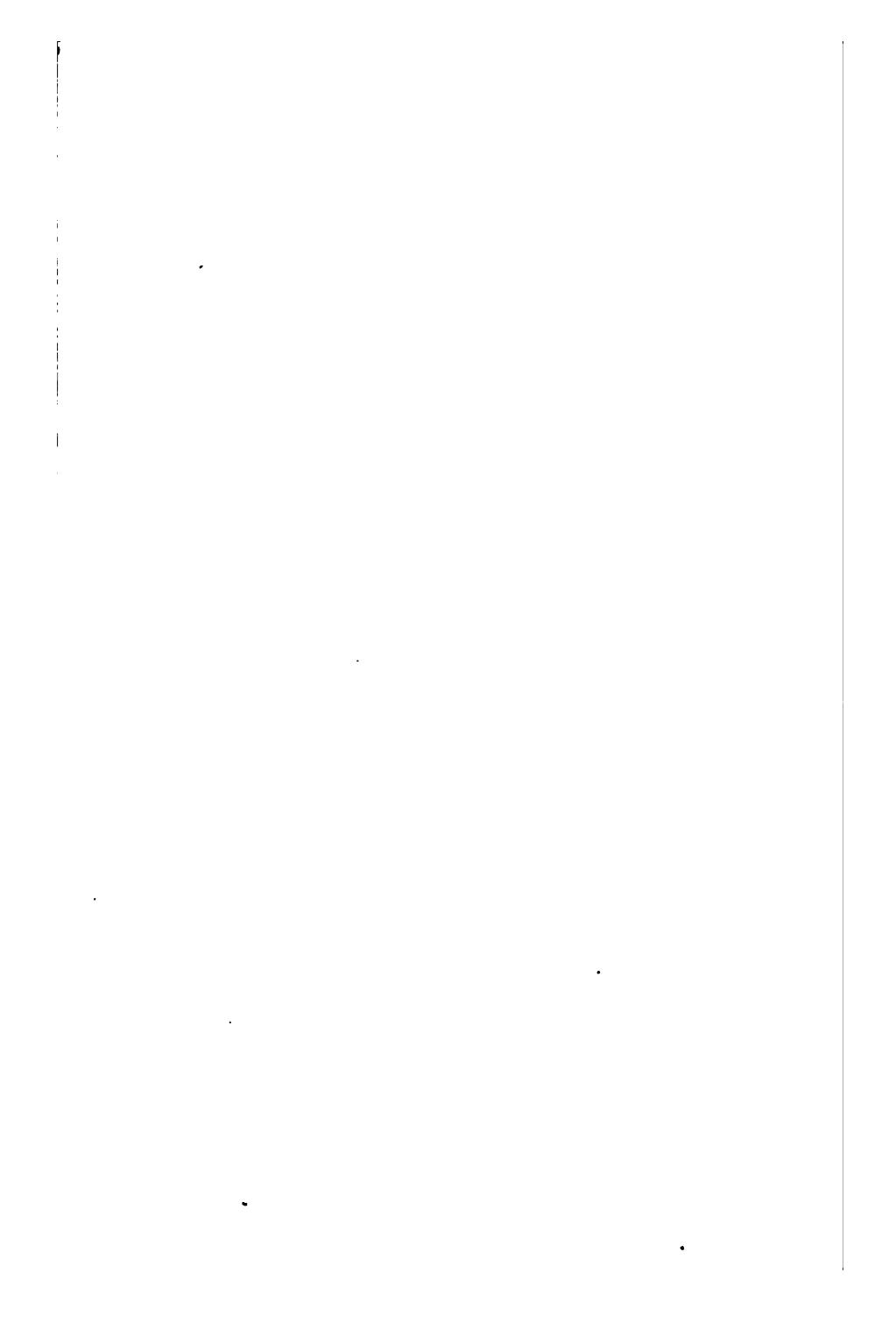
into a similar temptation, especially if they were Christians. While gathering up this trait of manners, we blush less, however, for Etienne Pascal, than for human nature.

We, too, have our superstitions and manias. We, of the

woman that she was going to perform some new witchcraft with the cat; upon which she threw it out of a window not more than six feet from the ground, and the cat fell dead. She then asked for another, which my grandfather gave her, never once thinking that it was of any consequence how many cats she had, or what she did with them, provided anything could be done for his darling child. The idea that she was going to invoke the devil again, in order to alter the spell, did not occur to him till long afterwards, and then he was very sorry to have countenanced the proceeding.

"In the evening the woman came back and told him that she wanted a child under seven, who should gather, before sunrise, nine leaves of three kinds of herbs, three of a kind. He told his apothecary, who promised that he would himself accompany his own little daughter on the morrow, which he did. The herbs being procured, the woman made a cataplasm of them, which she brought to my grandfather at seven in the morning, and bade him lay it on the child's stomach. This was done, but when he came back from court at noon, he found the servants crying, and they told him that the child was dead. He went up-stairs, and beheld his wife in tears, while the baby lay in the cradle seemingly dead. He turned away, and meeting the woman who brought him the plaster on the staircase, which application he was convinced had killed the child, he gave her a box on the ear that pitched her down the whole flight of stairs. The woman picked herself up, and told him she knew he was enraged because he thought his child was dead, but that she had forgotten in the morning to say that it would appear as if it were a corpse until midnight, but that, if it were left quietly in its cradle until that time, it would recover. My grandfather went back, and declared that the child should not be buried for the present, although it seemed quite dead, having neither pulse, voice, nor feeling, being cold, and looking precisely like a corpse. People were amused at my grandfather's credulity, especially as he had never before been known to give any heed to such things, but he and my grandmother did not leave the room where the baby lay, being afraid to trust any one but themselves. They heard the clock strike every hour till midnight, without perceiving any change in the child, but towards one o'clock it began to yawn. This astonished them greatly, they took it up, warmed it, gave it wine and sugar, which was swallowed, and then its nurse fed it, but the child gave no sign of consciousness, and did not open its eyes until six o'clock in the morning. Then seeing its father and mother standing together, it began to cry as usual, which shewed that the cure was not complete; but they nevertheless felt comforted to think the child was alive, and in about six or seven days after, he began to bear the sight of water. My grandfather, on coming home one day from mass, found his son amusing himself on his mother's lap by pouring water out of one glass into another, and came towards them, but the child could not bear his approach for several days longer. At length, however, this symptom disappeared, and in three weeks the child was perfectly cured, and as fat as ever.

nineteenth century also believe in occult powers. Shall I add, that we have no fears of incurring a debt to the Prince of Darkness ? Gross errors are growing refined. Prejudices yield to systems, which, after all, are but prejudices under a new name. We do exploits against error, though we no longer individualise it. Many reflections might be made upon this state of things. But we prefer to say, that the bright light which has already swallowed up so many shadows is not yet extinct,—it has not paled. And from the eternal East a new morning dawns, while the Everlasting Sun of humanity is rising for us anew !



APPENDIX.

APPENDIX

Regulations for Children.

BY JAQUELINE PASCAL.

REFERENCE has repeatedly been made in the preceding pages to Jacqueline Pascal's *Regulations for Children*. In consequence of their allusions to the practices of the Romish Church, which are so *deservely* objectionable to Protestants, it was at one time intended to give only a brief abstract of their contents, but, on reflection, it seemed scarcely fair to remove all the traces of a superstition which was blended with so much unselfishness and heartfelt piety. While presenting, therefore, this picture of education at Port Royal, the translator hopes that no injury may accrue to the reader of this curious relic of a by-gone age. It is not likely that so severe a discipline will win for itself any imitators in the present day. Even Pascal himself mentions in his *Thoughts*, that the children of Port Royal, deprived of the spur of emulation, could with difficulty be made to take sufficient interest in their studies to insure a moderate improvement. And it was deemed necessary, when the *Regulations* were first published, to add a preface, qualifying their extreme severity.

"These *Regulations*," remarks M. Cousin, "contain many beautiful passages. He gives them entire, with the advertisement of the editors, which points out the errors of a discipline so austere."

ADVERTISEMENT.

ALTHOUGH these *Regulations for Children* are not imaginary, but, on the contrary, are an embodiment of the system pursued for many years at Port Royal des Champs, it must,

nevertheless, be owned, that in other places it may not always be easy, or indeed advisable, to carry them out in every particular. For it is quite possible, on the one hand, all children may not be capable of enduring so long a silence, and so monotonous a life, without becoming a prey to discouragement and ennui, which ought carefully to be avoided. Or, on the other hand, all governesses may not be able to maintain a discipline so strict, and at the same time to win the love and confidence of their charge, which is all-important, in order for the result of education to be successful. It is the part of prudence, therefore, to moderate all these things, and, in the words of one of the Popes, to unite the strength which rules children without alienating them, and the kindness that gains their affection, yet does not spoil them.

REGULATIONS FOR CHILDREN.

April 17, 1657.

MY VERY DEAR AND HONOURED FATHER,*—I humbly entreat your forgiveness for having so long deferred rendering you an account of my conduct towards the children. My reason for not doing this when you first mentioned it to me, was this. I thought you wished me to write down the manner in which they ought to be trained up, and I did not deem it possible for one possessing so little light as I do, to undertake a task of such difficulty without great presumption. For I can assure you that obedience is my only inducement to begin at all, and if I do not make a complete failure, it may be attributed to the force of our Mother's words, who told me, when she laid the charge of these children upon me, that I need feel no anxiety, for God would himself do

* Jacqueline is here addressing her spiritual father, her confessor, most probably the Abbé Singlin.

everything. This so completely quieted the trouble occasioned by my own impotence, that I became full of confidence, and as calm as if God had actually made me the promise. And I own, that when I look at myself and begin to feel discouraged, as you know to my shame I often do, then these brief words, *God will do everything*, pronounced in faith, are able to restore peace to my soul. You, however, have lately removed my previous anxiety by telling me that you did not require me to give you a sketch of education as it ought to be conducted, but simply to state my own method of guiding children, in order to observe my frequent faults, which not only undo the work of God, as effected by my instrumentality, but greatly hinder the progress of his grace in their souls.

In order to maintain some degree of order in the account thus rendered, I shall begin by telling you, in the first place, how I have parcelled out the hours of the day, and, in the second, what I do for their guidance both spiritual and bodily.

DIVISION OF THE DAY.

OF THE CHILDREN'S RISING.

1. The eldest rise at four; the next in age, at half-past four; those partly grown, at five; and the youngest, according to their size and strength. For you know that we have pupils of all ages, from four years to seventeen and eighteen.

2. The person awaking them says *Jesus*, and they answer, *Maria*, or *Deo Gratias*.

3. They must rise promptly, not allowing themselves time to get thoroughly awake, for fear of yielding to idleness. If they feel ill, they must mention it to the person awaking them, so that they may be allowed to rest. If any of the

elder ones usually requires more rest than the others, it is allowed her, so that, when the hour prescribed for her arrives, she may get up at once, because it is dangerous to get accustomed to be idle in the early morning.

4. As they wake, they repeat a short prayer, suitable to that hour.

5. Immediately after rising, they worship God and kiss the ground. Then they pass into the dressing-room, and again worship God, kneeling on both knees before the oratory, and speaking aloud, lest any one should forget the duty.

6. The elder ones then comb each other's hair. This must be done in perfect silence, because it is but right that their first words should be those of prayer and thanksgiving to God. If any of them find it necessary to speak, they must address their governess, in order that she may herself procure what they need from whoever takes charge of it. This prevents them from saying a word to one another during the deep morning silence, and also saves them from temptation, since they might otherwise whisper low on some unnecessary topic, and then, if asked what they were saying, might answer by a falsehood. This rigid silence continues until the *Pretiosa* of Prime, and is also observed after the evening Angelus, even in summer, when they walk in the garden.

OF THE PERIOD OF DRESSING.

1. They are exhorted to comb and dress themselves as quickly as they can, in order to acquire the habit of spending the least possible time in adorning a body which must one day become pasture for worms, and also to compensate for time wasted by women of the world in dressing, and in arranging their hair.

2. As soon as the great girls are dressed, they are to comb

and dress the little ones with the same silence and despatch. We endeavour to have the whole business over by a quarter past six at the very latest, which is about the time when the bell rings for early mass.

3. Each elder girl is careful to have the little ones repeat prayers while she is dressing them.

OF MORNING PRAYERS.

1. At the last stroke of Prime, or *Pretiosa* at the very latest, they kneel down and begin prayers when their governess gives the word. She, or the sister who aids her, is always present. They first repeat their own special prayers, and then the Morning Service. Every week a child is appointed to begin the prayers which are repeated up-stairs. I shall therefore call her hereafter *la Semainière* (Monitress).

2. Prime and Compline prayers are said in a moderate tone, neither too high nor too low, and accompanied with slight intervals of meditation. Meanwhile, all the children remain standing.

3. They are told that they maintain this attitude in order to testify that they are ready to perform God's holy will.

4. All the common prayers repeated up-stairs are said slowly, distinctly, and with right emphasis.

5. At the close of Prime, a short space, about two *Miserere*, is allotted them to reflect before God on the duties of the whole day, and on the chief faults committed the day before, in order that they may implore him for grace to foresee and avoid temptations to do the like.

OF THE CHILDREN'S BEDS, AND BREAKFAST.

When prayers are over, they all go together to make their

own beds and those of the little ones, doing this in couples as directed. No one may leave a room until all the beds in it are made, unless the sister who accompanies them should allow others to be commenced in an adjoining room, and place herself where she can keep watch over both apartments. Even then she must be careful what children are sent, and only select those whom she knows to be prudent and trustworthy.

2. While the beds are being made, one girl prepares breakfast, and the requisite things for washing the hands, with wine and water to wash the mouth.

3. The beds being made, they wash their hands, and then breakfast. Meanwhile, one of them reads the Martyrology of the day, so that they may know what saints the Church on that day remembers, and may honour them and implore their protection.

OF WORK.

1. After breakfast, which is over by half-past seven at the very latest, all withdraw into the work-room, where they must diligently improve their time, and keep a strict silence. If it is necessary to speak, they must do it softly, so as not to interrupt those who are old enough to hold communion with God.

2. Even the little ones are taught not to speak, though they are allowed to play when their work has been well and silently done ; but in their brief intervals of play, each must play by herself, so that there may be no noise. I have found that this solitude does not trouble the children, for when they are used to it, they seem to amuse themselves very merrily.

3. The children are taught that their work is not to be unprofitable, but that they may consecrate it to God by doing

it from love to him. Subjects of meditation are presented to them, according to the season or festival; and when their governess is present, she from time to time repeats passages of Scripture calculated to strengthen the mind, and keep it from vain and wandering thoughts. We are careful, however, to avoid extremes, and do not seek to render them too spiritually-minded, unless God himself have made them so, because their youth might occasion two evils, if we did;—either they might set too close a watch upon themselves, and so weary the mind and fancy, instead of communing with God; or, on the other hand, might feel too much disengaged at finding it impossible to attain the perfection demanded of them.

4. We try to accustom the children to deny themselves, and not to indulge their preferences for any particular kind of work. For this reason we tell them that the less their occupation pleases them, the more it will please God, and therefore they ought to perform disagreeable tasks with more industry and good-humour, and learn to work with a spirit of penitence. But, nevertheless, we do really humour their tasks as far as we can, without allowing them to perceive the condescension.

5. They are not suffered to work in pairs, unless in case of necessity, and then a very good girl is placed with one more imperfect, in order that the strong may support the weak.

6. They are exhorted not to be too fond of their work; and to leave off as soon as the bell rings, either to go to divine service, or to repeat it in private, because they ought always to be ready for their religious duties, and to care only for those.

7. When the governess is present, she may take the opportunity of inquiring how they understood mass, and of explaining its meaning more particularly, teaching them how to profit by it.

8. When any one does wrong, she must be reproved in presence of the rest, and occasion may thence be taken to expatriate on the ugliness of vice and the beauty of virtue. I have found nothing so useful and well remembered by children as instructions thus given.

9. We avoid talking too much to them, for fear of over-loading the mind. I find that instruction does much more good when they are not wearied with it. For this reason, I think it well sometimes to let several days pass without giving them any instructions, and to make them as it were hunger for spiritual nourishment. They thus receive better what may afterwards be said to them.

10. We are careful not to have them untidy, careless, or negligent, and to see that they put things away, and do not lose them, but are neat and diligent in everything they do.

11. We accustom them also to love work, and to carry its materials always with them, so as not to hinder time if any unexpected detention occurs. They also work during their recreation, those, at least, who are grown up, though they are not obliged to do this. We merely advise them to form a habit of never being idle, and this once done, there is no more difficulty; on the contrary, it answers instead of amusements, as I see, by God's grace, is the case with our girls, who find nothing so tiresome as holidays. I find it a good way of forming this habit of industry, to allow them to do some work which they like, and cannot do at any other time. I taught them, for instance, to make worsted gloves, and as they can only do this during their recess, they are very eager after it.

12. At every hour during the day, one of them repeats aloud a prayer suitable to the season and time, during Lent, on the Passion, &c. All continue sitting, except her who recites the prayer, and she kneels down as soon as the clock strikes.

13. We are careful to have them ask and receive the materials for their work politely, to make them hold themselves uprightly and gracefully, and curtsey when they enter or leave the room. Therefore, though they wear a veil, they only make a nun's obeisance when they approach the Holy Sacrament.

14. In the interval between breakfast and eight o'clock, the elder ones, who have rooms to sweep and cells to arrange, do it expeditiously and silently. We never allow two to be together except we are convinced of their discretion.

15. At eight o'clock, all who have been busied in this way up-stairs must leave everything and return to the work-room, in order to hear the governess read until Tierce, which is repeated at half-past eight. This reading is selected from the subject of the Church services at the time: during Advent, it relates to the mystery of the Incarnation; from Christmas to Candlemas, to the birth of our Saviour and the Adoration of the Magi; in Lent, to the Passion; and so on, through the year. And at the same time, when any remarkable saint's day comes, a selection is made from the saint's life. This reading is intended to afford a subject of thought and conversation through the day. Some remarks are always added by way of application or of instruction, so that they may better comprehend it.

OF DIVINE SERVICE.

1. When the Tierce-bell rings, they kneel down to ask a blessing of our Lord, saying, *Benedicat nos, Deus Deus noster, benedictus noster Deus, et metuant eum omnes fines terra*, which they do whenever they go out to attend church; in order that God may graciously keep them from wandering thoughts, and enable them to behave properly in presence of the sisterhood.

2. We usually allow all who are fourteen years old, and healthy, to attend the whole of the divine service on festival days, and even Matins, if they are anxious to go, and have deserved the permission. They go to the services of Tierce and Vespers on double and half-double days, and on the octave of every principal feast-day. On special festivals and Sundays they are also allowed to attend Prime, and on those days, too, the whole of them, great and small, usually go to Tierce and Vespers. They also do this on Thursdays and on the festivals of some of the holy doctors, and others whom the children reverence, though festivals are not held in their honour.

3. However, this rule of going to divine service on the above-named days is not observed as indispensable. Each must ask to attend, according to the degree of her devotion, and permission is granted as a great favour. We exhort them not to go unless they feel devout; for it is better to have them wish to go to church more frequently than they are allowed, because then we have the right not to suffer any inattention.

4. We are careful to have them behave with great modesty, not permitting any looking about; making them sing whenever they can, obliging them to attend to their books even if they know the whole service by heart, to make deep obeisances, and to stand upright.

5. Those who are allowed the privilege of singing anything in the choir must strain every nerve to do it well, remembering that they are doing the work of angels, and that it is a great privilege to be thus employed. They must know the solo parts perfectly; if they make a mistake they are punished for it, and have to sing over what they missed in the refectory, sometimes for many days together, in order to cure them of timidity, if that happened to be the cause of their failure.

6. A sister must always remain with those who do not attend church, to watch them, even if there are only two.

7. Whenever they go among the sisterhood, they are to walk in file as in a procession, no matter how few in number, and care must be taken not to place those together who would be likely to speak. They never go anywhere without an attendant.

8. They are not usually suffered to go about the convent alone, still less in twos or threes; but if it chance to be absolutely necessary to send thither on an errand, one of the most discreet and least prying is selected; but this rarely happens.

OF THE HOLY MASS.

1. After Tierce, all go to mass, except the very small children, or those who are still giddy and foolish. A sister remains to watch these, and causes them to listen to mass with the same reverence as at church.

They are early accustomed to hear mass on their knees; it is found that the posture is less painful when practised in youth.

2. It is thought far better, when the children are very young or giddy, to keep them in a room, when it is not positively necessary for them to attend church, rather than to let them acquire the bad habit of talking or jesting when there.

3. At the beginning of the *Sub tuum praesidium*, which is an anthem chanted to the Holy Virgin immediately before mass, they all kneel down in pairs within the choir, having their ungloved hands folded over the scapulary. They ought to maintain great reverence of demeanour, and to lift up their hearts to God. To this end we try to instruct them in all the ceremonies and observances of the holy mass, using the Explanations of M. de St Cyran on that subject, and teaching

them to seek God's aid in every prayer they offer, because no prayer can be acceptable to him unless inspired by the Holy Spirit that groans and pleads within us.

4. I cannot help saying that it is impossible to be too particular in teaching children to reverence the sanctuary, especially during divine service, nor in punishing severely the faults they commit there, even forbidding them to attend church at all, except on high festival days, for as long a space of time as seems necessary for their good, though they be the eldest of all. For the older they are, the wiser they ought to be.

OF WRITING.

1. On leaving mass, they all write in the same place, after offering a short prayer that God would aid them to perform that duty aright. For we try to impress their minds gently with a holy habit of never commencing or closing an action of any importance without prayer. They offer such prayers as they choose, and as God inspires. The smallest are taught to say an Ave Maria when they begin or end any duty.

2. Silence during the writing-lesson is strictly enforced. They are not allowed to shew each other their papers, nor to write according to their fancy. They simply write after their copy, or transcribe something if they are further advanced and allowed so to do.

3. They may not write to each other letters, notes, or sentences, without permission from their governess, and if this is granted, they must hand it to her, that she may give it to the person for whom it was meant. The writing-lesson lasts three quarters of an hour.

4. The remaining time before Sexte is spent in learning to sing by note, with silence and deep reverence.

OF PRAYER BEFORE DINNER.

1. When Sexte is rung, one of them, to wit, the *semainière* (monitress), kneels down in the middle of the room, in order to recall their thoughts to God, and enable them in heart to participate in the service then going on in the choir.

2. Although the little sisters are required to be silent through the whole day, except at conference time, yet there are two special seasons when it is requisite to observe a more rigid stillness—the first at morning and evening, of which I have already spoken, and the second during the service and masses which are said in the convent when they are not present. They must put things in order, and provide for their wants, so that they need not apply to their governess for directions about their work, nor, if they can avoid it, speak at all; that thus they may themselves commune with God, and allow their mistresses time to recite the prayers. At other times they can prefer their requests with more freedom.

3. If one of their exercises, in singing or repeating the catechism, occurs during a time of divine service, it is not broken off, but we desire them to carry it on more quietly than usual, and to say the little prayer at the beginning of each service that is said in the choir, though it may interrupt the lesson. This makes them remember to turn their thoughts to God.

4. At eleven they all examine themselves, after repeating the *Confiteor* as far as *mea culpa*.

5. Sometimes, during the evening and morning self-examination, we remind them of some fault, which they may not have noticed, but which was committed in public, in order gently to accustom them to a thorough self-examination.

6. When this examination is over, they all repeat the rest of the *Confiteor* aloud, and then the *semainière* asks God to pardon the sins already committed, and to give them grace to employ the remainder of the day better.

7. At the close of the examination, some repeat their Sexte in private ; this is allowed to the elder ones who seem pious enough to recite it properly. They are permitted to say from Laudes to Complies.

OF THE REFECTIONARY.

1. The dinner-bell rings immediately after Sexte, and they proceed to the dining-room as modestly as to church. On reaching it they curtsey in pairs, and do the same in passing before any of the sisters. They stand in their places meekly until grace is said, which they repeat with the sisters, modestly, their sleeves falling over their hands.

2. After grace they sit down, not according to rank, for it is judged best to mix those who have most discretion among the others, so that there may be no talking.

3. We are careful not to encourage them in any daintiness, but exhort them to eat whatever is given them, beginning by the things they like least, in a penitent spirit, and taking sufficient food to keep them from faintness. For this reason we watch what they eat.

4. They must keep their eyes always down, not looking on either hand, but quietly listening to what is read. They then say grace with the sisters, and go out in the same order as they came in.

OF RECREATION.

1. On leaving the dining-hall, they have a recess. The little ones are kept apart from the elder ones, so that the latter may converse more quietly and discreetly, which they cannot do when small children are present, whose age permits them to amuse themselves with games that would only weary the others.

2. If the recess is held in a room, the elder ones gather in

a circle round the mistress, and talk modestly and sociably, according to their ability.

3. They are not required to talk seriously nor of holy things all the time, though profitable discourse may be discreetly thrown in, and carried on if they appear to like it.

4. They may be allowed to play at innocent games, such as battledore and shuttlecock, or others of a like kind. Not that our girls avail themselves of this permission, for all of them, except the very youngest, work on without losing a moment, and are so fond of work, that, as I have already said, an entire holiday is irksome to them.

5. We do not allow them to sit apart, even in the same room, still less to form groups of two or three together, or to speak in under-tones. The governess must hear whatever is said, and we strictly observe a rule of making them repeat aloud what they may have whispered, no matter in what place, unless they humbly entreat to be allowed to say it to the mistress alone. And as it might possibly be something improper to be spoken aloud, they are taught in that case to be silent, and on no account to repeat what would be injurious or uncharitable, or they will be punished in the same way as if they had concealed something they were bound to tell.

6. Though young people are rarely discreet, we try to make them so at all times and in all places, more especially at recess, when it seems as if they had a right to say what they choose, and to amuse themselves. And therefore their governesses are careful to converse with them, and to introduce rational discourse by way of improving their minds.

7. They are never allowed to repeat what may be said to them in private or at the confessional, no matter how edifying it may be, because those who have never had anything special said to them might feel jealous.

8. They must not speak of the singing of the sisterhood,

remarking that one sister sings better than another, or noticing mistakes made in the choir. They must not talk of the sisters receiving the sacrament, and we carefully teach them not to observe this, nor to consider those who take the sacrament often as more holy than those who commune less frequently. They are told that each obeys the leadings of God's Spirit and the commands of the Abbess, and that we must neither condemn nor praise the conduct of any in this matter, but leave all to God that judgeth.

9. They must not comment on any occurrence in the dining-room, such as the penance of a nun or of one of their own number.

10. They are also forbidden to speak of the penances imposed on themselves, for fear of making light of such things, or of frightening one another.

11. Nor are they allowed to relate their dreams, be they ever so beautiful or holy.

12. They may not repeat what they have heard in the parlour. If it be anything edifying, and fit to be generally known, the mistress does not fail to impart it, and thus gratifies their wish of making it public.

13. They are sometimes told any trivial piece of news, such as the profession of a novice, the contents of a note sent by some one asking the prayers of the choir, or any religious anecdote, in order to remove the wish of gaining such information in an improper way.

14. They are never reproved during recess, unless it is unavoidable ; nor are any new regulations ever mentioned to them then, lest they should feel at liberty to give their opinion more freely, and thus incur a reprimand, which is always to be, as far as possible, avoided.

15. Not that any grave fault is passed over if committed during play-time ; on the contrary, it would be reproved more sternly than at any other hour, lest the offender should

give free way to her passions, under pretence of amusement. I merely mean that slight faults are not noticed, and past offences are never referred to then.

16. They are exhorted not to speak all at once, for fear of noise, but to hear each other ; and when one begins to speak, not to interrupt her, which they are told would be very rude.

17. Uncharitable conversation is specially prohibited, and they are taught never to say what might possibly be unpleasant to one of their number, though in itself harmless, because it is enough to know that any one present would prefer some other topic of discourse.

18. We try to make them yield precedence to one another, from that holy politeness which charity alone produces.

19. The children are to avoid every kind of personal familiarity, and never to caress, to kiss, or even touch one another, on any pretext whatever. Neither must the elder ones pet the little children. If these things are forbidden in play-time, much more at other times, when they may not speak but in presence of their governess, except to procure what they need.

20. The recess closes with a prayer, asking for grace to enable them to pass holily the remainder of the day.

OF INSTRUCTION.

1. Recess being over, they range themselves in two rows along the middle of the room, ready to be taught ; then, kneeling down, they all repeat the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and their instructress recites a prayer and a short verse of Scripture.

2. After prayer, all sit down, and those who choose to confess their faults aloud can do so, but this is in nowise

imperative. On the contrary, they know it to be a privilege, and are accustomed to do it with a very good will.

3. They must respectfully listen to every caution, and we try to reprove as kindly as possible, that they may be convinced we do so for their good, not shewing any partiality.

4. They are made to understand that no improper feeling, such as passion or self-interest, leads us to speak of their faults, which does not prevent our reprobating them with severity, so that they may be truly humbled and ashamed. For if they made a practice of confessing faults, in order that others might think them very conscientious, it would become a hypocritical mockery, which we are beyond all things anxious to avoid. And, therefore, we make them do penance for every important fault which they confess, but I do not see that this makes them less candid.

5. They never confess such faults before their companions on Sundays or festival days.

6. As soon as this confession is over, which lasts about a quarter of an hour, we spend the rest of the hour in teaching and hearing them repeat the lesson of the day before. Three or four children are made to repeat what was then taught them. Sometimes one is questioned, and sometimes another, because it would take too long to catechise them all. If the confession of faults took up a whole half-hour, we continue for another quarter, needing that space to hear the repetitions.

7. On days for which there is a special Gospel, as in Lent, Quatre-temps, and on Saturdays or Sundays, all rise, and with folded hands reverently listen to both Epistle and Gospel.

8. After the Gospel is read, we explain it with the utmost simplicity. On days for which there is no Gospel, we instruct them in the catechism, or expatiate on some religious virtue. They are also taught the proper mode of confessing,

taking the communion, examining themselves, and praying to God aright. We do not pass hastily from one topic to another, but give them time to understand what has been said.

9. When the catechism is explained, it takes a long time : for we begin with the sign of the cross, and go on to the articles of belief, and the commandments of God and the Church, leaving the chief mysteries to be explained on those days which the Church has set apart for their commemoration.

10. I will now tell you what has been my method for the last four years. The first year, I explained the creed, the sign of the cross, and the commandments. The second year, I tried to make them understand the meaning of the holy mass as it is laid down in the *New Choir*, for, though they had the book, they understood nothing, because they read by rote without reflection, or at least the greater part did so, more especially those lately come.

11. I explained, in like manner, the evening and morning prayers, self-examination, and other duties of a good Christian. Afterwards I spoke of the Christian graces, using the text-book of St John Climacus.*

12. During the present year, I have taught them the nature of repentance out of the Tradition of the Church. My intention is now, by God's help, to explain the catechism by M. de St Cyran very minutely, and thereby shew them their duty to God and their neighbour, and how to behave.

13. Their instruction closes with the prayer *Confirma hoc Deus, &c.* The whole exercise occupies about two hours and a half. They may work while it goes on, unless they need to ask questions about their work ; in that case, they must sit

* This was a work entitled *The Holy Ladder, or Steps on the Way to Heaven*. Arnauld d'Andilly translated it into French from the Greek. The second edition appeared in 1661.

and, in order to answer their own or their companion's questions.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE INTERVAL BETWEEN NONES AND VESPERS.

COLLATION.

1. From Nones to Vespers a lesson from the catechism is recited, one questioning, the next responding, one day, and reversing the order on the morrow. They finish by repeating a hymn, either in Latin or French. These repetitions are not troublesome, and waste no time, because each child remains in her seat, and goes on with her work.

2. It is necessary to exercise the memory of children often; for this opens their minds, gives them occupation, and keeps them out of mischief.

3. The remainder of the time, from instruction to Vespers, is passed in working silently. Meanwhile, some of the half-grown girls, who do not read well, practise reading, as they also do at suitable opportunities through the day. Those who read aloud in the work-room ought to read intelligibly, that others may profit by what is read.

4. As to the little ones, we find that they learn to read best alone; therefore the elder girl who is appointed to teach them, does so at intervals through the day in another room. One who intends to be a nun is chosen for this office, and however, we are careful to select no one who is not perfectly discreet, well-behaved, and gentle, and willing to teach them out of love to God.

5. About half-past three there is a luncheon for the half-grown and little girls. The elder ones are readily excused from eating it, if they wish it, because they do not so much need it, for we dine late and sup early, and those who do not

eat between meals usually enjoy better health. Therefore, after they are fourteen, we allow them to omit luncheon, except in cases where it seems necessary, and then they must be made to eat something. We do not readily excuse the younger ones, when they ask it, lest they should do so from hypocrisy, or from a wish to act like great girls.

6. Meanwhile, if the more pious of the elder ones wish to pray, we go aside with them for that purpose, and remain until their prayers are over.

7. Those only are allowed to pray at this time who appear, as far as we can judge, to desire it as a means of pleasing God, and benefiting their own souls.

OF THE VESPER HOUR, AND THE OCCUPATION OF TIME UNTIL
SUPPER.

1. At four o'clock the elder ones go to Vespers, if they have deserved the indulgence.

2. In the meantime the little girls are catechised, for, although they are present while the others are taught, yet they do not understand what is going forward, and can only be made to comprehend when each is talked to separately.

3. From the close of Vespers to supper-time, one of the great girls reads aloud. If possible, the head-mistress must be present. When the bell rings, this reading ceases, and they all proceed to the refectory, as they do in the morning.

OF EVENING RECREATION, PRAYERS, AND GOING TO BED.

1. A recess follows the meal, as in the morning, only that in summer they go into the garden in the evening, and in winter in the morning.

2. The children are kept apart with the same care. We try to have two nuns walk with the great girls, if any of

these are at all ill-disposed or unruly, so that one nun may walk behind and discover whether any fall back under pretence of weariness, in order to whisper together.

3. This evening recess lasts till the first stroke of Complies, except in the extreme heat of summer, when they remain longer out of doors for the sake of fresh air. But it must not be prolonged beyond half-past seven, when evening prayers begin. In extreme heat, they may be recited in the garden, the children kneeling down in some quiet spot, and repeating Complies with the same tone of voice as in the morning prayers at Prime. They can walk while repeating the Psalms, provided they stop when it is necessary to perform the ceremonies of the service.

4. When the weather is not so warm, they begin prayers at the first stroke of Complies, so as to be ready for the *Salve*, at which they are present in the choir throughout the year, except during the three summer months, from the octave of the holy sacrament until the end of August, and then they are not summoned from a walk which we think beneficial at that hour.

5. On leaving the choir or the garden, they go straight up-stairs, undress with silence and despatch, and in winter or summer are all in bed by a quarter past eight, each in her separate bed. This rule is without exception.

6. As soon as they are in bed, each is visited, either in her cell or couch, to see if she is properly covered, and sufficiently warm in winter.

7. After this the lamps are put out, except one which is left burning in case of its being needed in the night.

8. A nun sleeps in every room, or else a great girl whom we can thoroughly trust.

9. Such is the order of each day. Not that no changes are ever made in the hours of special employment, for this

is done on fast-days and in Lent, when the mornings are longer than the afternoons.

RULES FOR FEAST-DAYS.

1. On feast-days the whole day is spent in little exercises, to improve the time and prevent ennui or jesting, which would be unavoidable if they were not kept busy, since children have not power to consecrate every hour of the day to God's service.

2. They rise and dress at the same hour as on working days.

3. At six o'clock, if the children are nearly dressed, the elder ones who wish to attend Prime can do so, provided they have permission, which is only granted when their motive appears to be a love to God and a wish to sing his praise. It is the same with every service through the day. Afterwards early mass is said, at which all are present, great and small.

4. After mass, they make the beds and breakfast, till eight o'clock, when they all assemble to hear the lecture, as on working days.

5. At half-past eight nearly all go to Tierce, and all attend high mass.

6. Between high mass and Sexte there is about three quarters of an hour, in which they commit to memory important truths, such as familiar theology, the exercise of holy mass, the treatise on confirmation. Afterwards, they learn all the French hymns in their Prayer-book, and then the Latin ones in the Breviary. Those who enter the convent young, often learn the whole Psalter by heart. They do it readily enough, with a little pressing and stimulating from us.

7. At Sexte they examine their conscience, and then those who are allowed attend Sexte.

8. After Sexte comes dinner, and then a recess of an hour.
9. From one to two, the great girls learn arithmetic ; the younger write copies, and the little ones say their catechism.
10. From two to half-past, the elder teach arithmetic to the younger, and from half-past to three, repeat Nones.
11. Every hour the elder ones repeat their chants by note, and one shews the little ones how it is done. Even if they only say the notes, it fills up the time, keeps them from getting tired, and thus by degrees they learn to sing.
12. At four o'clock, all attend Vespers and the ensuing worship.
13. After Vespers, the elder ones who greatly wish, and have gained permission so to do, remain at prayer until supper-time. The others are taken back to the room, and spend the intervening half-hour or less as they please, either in reading the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*, or in repeating something that they know by heart.
14. The remainder of the day is spent as usual.

SECOND PART OF THE RULES FOR CHILDREN.

Having thus stated to you the manner in which the children's days are spent, it remains for me to proceed to the second thing you require of me, namely, my method of supplying their spiritual and bodily necessities. Not that I am able always to fulfil my own ideas of duty, for which reason you are bound to implore of God that he would make me what I ought to be, in order to benefit the immortal beings committed to the care of one so incapable of serving them. There are many things which, for lack of suitable terms, cannot be exactly explained, but obedience forces me to sur-

mount my own repugnance to the task, and I therefore go on to state not only what I do, but what I think ought to be done, for their education.

I.

In what spirit we ought to attend to children.—Harmony of the mistresses.—
Some general advice on their behaviour, especially to small children.

1. I think that, really to do children any good, we ought never to speak or act for their benefit without first looking to God, and asking his holy aid, that we may thus obtain from him the power of guiding them in his fear.
2. We ought to be very kind and tender towards them, never neglecting either their internal or external wants, and shewing them, on every occasion, that we grudge nothing to serve them. We do this from love, and heartily, because they are God's children, and we spare no pains to make them worthy of that high dignity.
3. It is very necessary to give ourselves entirely up to them without any reserve, not leaving their part of the house except it is unavoidable; always staying in the room where they work, unless we are busy in teaching them, visiting them in sickness, or providing for their wants.
4. We must not regret the privation of attending divine service, except for the sake of the elder girls, for it is so important to watch children constantly, that every other duty must give way to this, if it be laid upon us, and much more our own comfort even in spiritual things. The charity which leads us to deny ourselves for their sakes, will not only cover many of our own defects, but will stand instead of much that we should, under other circumstances, find conducive to our growth in grace.
5. There must be a sister associated with us, whom we can trust, without devolving our own responsibility on her. This

sister must remain as much as possible in the room. It would be very desirable to have two, prompted by the same spirit of zeal and love to children, who could usually stay in the room together, even when the first mistress was present, because the propriety of the children's behaviour before her would give them both a right to exact the same respect in her absence.

6. We ought to let the children see that we are living in perfect union, trust, and confidence with the sister allotted as our assistant. It is best not to countermand any order she may have given, even when it is wrong, that the children may not perceive any disagreement, but to wait and tell her of it in private. For it is important, and almost necessary, if we would bring children up well, that the sister selected as our aid should take what is said to her in good part. If this is not the case, the superior ought to be told. But if her opposition is of a kind that does not hurt the children, but only annoys us, it is better to ask God to make us thankful that our inclinations are in this manner crossed.

7. We must pray often that God would make the children feel a deep reverence for the sisters who are with us. We ought also to strengthen their authority, especially hers, who stands next to ourselves. Therefore it is well to shew the children, and even to tell them occasionally, that she has great charity for them, that she loves them, and it is we who oblige her to render us an account of all that goes on in the room. And it is also well to say to herself, in presence of the children, that she is bound, in duty and charity, to tell us not only of their important faults, but even of their lighter ones, so that we may endeavour to correct them.

8. We place confidence in the sisters who assist us, so far as to inform them of the children's dispositions, especially those of the little ones, and of the elder girls, if these are likely to cause trouble, so that they may keep better watch.

Yet we are not to be ready to repeat to them what the children say to us in private, unless it seems necessary for the good of the latter, lest they might, through some inadvertence, discover that we had done so. I believe it to be very important for children to be able to rely on our secrecy, for though their communications may be unimportant now, yet hereafter, when they are older, more particularly, they may have something of importance to confide, which they would hesitate to tell, if they knew that we had not been faithful to them in little things.

9. And important as it is that we should have perfect union and intelligence with the sisters who assist us, it is still more important that these sisters should only act in accordance with the rules they find in operation, and should so yield to the wishes of the head-mistress, as to speak with her mouth, and see with her eyes, in order that the children may never perceive any want of harmony between their teachers. If the sisters find any fault in the first mistress's plans, they ought to tell her of it, provided they feel sufficient confidence in her, and the Abbess gives permission. If God does not inspire them with such confidence, they must mention it to the Superior, lest they should inadvertently betray their lack of it before the children.

10. When two nuns are present in the work-room, and the bell for prayers rings, one can repeat those prayers while the other keeps an eye upon the children, but she is not to notice any trivial faults till her companion has finished, which will teach them to be reverent when other persons are at prayer. But when the office is over (and when repeated softly it does not take long), they are to be punished in proportion to the fault, even more severely than they would be at another time.

11. If the sister is alone with the children, she must not hesitate to keep an eye on them, but had better say nothing

till her prayer is quite over. We find by experience that this course makes them more reverent in their own prayers, and much more afraid of interrupting others. We cannot inspire children with too great a fear of God, either by word or example. Therefore we are very careful always to say our prayers at the precise time when they are said in the choir, quitting our occupation at the second stroke of the bell, and never allowing ourselves to finish what we have begun. But if the children are in need of any special service, we must perform it in preference to our prayers ; still it is good both for the children and our own conscience, to be sure that our only motive is to please God, because example is the most effective method of teaching ; for the devil helps them to remember our slightest failures, and hinders them from remembering the little good we do.

12. For this reason we cannot be too earnest in prayer, too humble nor too vigilant in the discharge of our duties to the children. Our vow of obedience binds us to do this. It is one of the most important occupations in the convent, and we cannot be too fearful of failing to discharge it aright ; though we are not to be pusillanimous, but to put our trust in God, and to compel him by our continual crying to grant us that aid which, though undeserving, we implore through the blood of his Son, shed for the innocent beings confided to our care. We ought always to consider the little creatures as sacred deposits, placed by God in our hands, for which we must render an account to him. Therefore it is best to say little to the children, and much to God on their behalf.

13. And as we are obliged to be always among them, we must so conduct ourselves that they may never see any unevenness of temper in us ; and not treat them at times too indulgently, and at others too severely. These extremes usually meet ; for if we suffer ourselves to notice and pet

them, or to let them follow the bent of their own wills, re-proof must inevitably follow, and this inequality is harder for children to bear than the strictest maintenance of discipline.

14. We must never be too familiar with them, or put too much confidence, even in the great girls, but we are to treat them with true charity, providing whatever they require, and often anticipating their wants.

15. They ought to be treated politely, spoken to with respect, and always yielded to where it is possible, for this wins upon them greatly. It is well sometimes to indulge them in things of slight importance, so as to gain their love.

16. When it is requisite to reprove their follies or awkwardnesses, we must never mimic them or push them roughly, no matter how naughty they are; but, on the contrary, speak to them gently, and use good arguments to convince them they are in the wrong. This will keep them from sulkiness, and be likely to do them good.

17. We must often pray that God would make the children truthful, and also try to keep them free from artifice and *finesse*; but this requires discretion, lest our warnings against deceit should make them artful. I think it well not to let it appear that we think them deceitful, because sometimes they become so by dint of being suspected, and then employ all the disingenuous tricks of which they may have been wrongfully accused, to screen themselves from deserved punishment.

18. We ought, therefore, to keep unremitting watch over the children, never leaving them alone for a moment, sick or well, but it is best not to let them perceive this, lest they should cherish a spirit of distrust, and be continually on their guard against us; for they would thus get a habit of doing wrong in secret, especially the little ones. I believe that we ought to maintain guard in a spirit of kindness, and even trust, so that the children may feel that we love them, and

96. *Children's bad tempers.* If you have a bad-tempered child, you must first consider the cause. If it is a natural temper, you must try gently to restrain it, and not let it get the mastery. If it is a bad temper, you must be very strict with him, and not let him get the mastery over you. If it is a bad temper, you must be very strict with him, and not let him get the mastery over you. If it is a bad temper, you must be very strict with him, and not let him get the mastery over you.

97. *Children's natural tempers.* If there is a bad-tempered child, you must let him have his way, and not let him get the mastery over you. When the bad temper has been repeated three or four times, then may be suddenly punished for the whole at once, and the other in a more than occasional way.

98. *When there are children thoroughly vicious and rebellious.* It is well to force them to repeat the same offence seven or four times. They become completely fatigued by doing that we do not get weary of punishing them. But be patient a fault one day, and you run or incur it the next, makes no impression on the mind, and we are obliged ultimately to use stronger remedies than would have been necessary, had we been more consistent.

99. *Lying.* is a common fault with small children. We must therefore do all we can to prevent their forming so bad a habit, and try to prevent it by gently urging them to own when they have done wrong, and, if they make confession of their own accord, by forgiving them or lessening the punishment.

100. *Even when children are very young, say four or five*

years old, they must not be allowed to be idle all day long. It is better to divide their time, making them read for a quarter of an hour, and then play for another, and then work for a little while. The change amuses them, and keeps them from forming a bad habit to which children are much addicted, namely, folding their book and playing with it, or with their work, twisting round, and turning their heads every moment. But if we ask them to be diligent for a quarter or half-hour, and promise that, if they mind their book or their work, they shall then be allowed to play, they will do it well and willingly for the sake of the reward. And when this promise was made before they began to work, and they play meanwhile, it is best to say nothing, but as soon as the time is up, and they expect to go and play, we can make them sit down to work again, and tell them that we have no desire to be always talking, and since they have only amused themselves, they must now begin to work. This astonishes them, and makes them on their guard another time.

II.

Our aim in General Conversation, or on Special Occasions of Exhortation and Warning.

1. We make them understand that perfection does not lie in doing many extraordinary things, but in performing daily duties well, that is, willingly, and from a love to God, with a great desire of pleasing him, and of always doing his will with delight.

2. We teach them to value any little opportunities of enduring vexations calmly and out of love to God ; such as a slight from their companions, and unmerited accusation, the crossing of their inclinations and wishes, or the yielding of their own will in submission to that of their governess or of

some other person. They are told to consider these every-day trials as the gifts of God, and tokens of his special love and care, which thus furnish them with daily opportunities of growth in grace.

3. They should often be told of the pleasure and satisfaction there is in thoroughly consecrating one's self to God, and serving him in simplicity and truth, without any reserves ; that no service prompted by love is painful ; that diligence in obeying the movements of the Holy Spirit always obtains fresh supplies of grace ; that the same action may win heaven in some cases, and only deserve punishment in others, according to the state of our hearts and the purity or impurity of our motives. It is well to explain this by comparison, shewing, for instance, that to do right for the love of God, because we wish to please him, and to fulfil his holy will, prepares us for heaven ; while, on the contrary, the very same deed, if done out of hypocrisy, vanity, or a wish to be highly esteemed by our fellows, only deserves punishment, since it is not done to God, and we have no right to expect that he will reward instead of chastising our hypocrisy.

4. Children should be frequently exhorted to examine themselves, their dispositions, vices, and passions, and, as it were, to dig up the hidden roots of their faults. It is well, too, that they should know whither they naturally incline, so that they may lop off whatever is displeasing to God, and engraft holiness in its stead. For instance, if of an affectionate disposition, we may tell them it is their duty to change the love of self and friends into the love of God, and so forth.

5. We may sometimes shew them that one of the besetting sins of young people is stubbornness, and that this sin, to which they are naturally so prone, will be their ruin, by hindering them from attending to the warnings they receive, for it only belongs to persons of a proud spirit. They must, therefore, learn to love stern treatment, and to shew, by their

meek reception of advice, that they desire the destruction of everything in their natures that is displeasing to God.

6. We exhort them not to be afraid of doing right, for those who have formerly been disobedient are sometimes ashamed of doing right before persons who witnessed their naughtiness. These must be taught to ask God to strengthen them, so that they may willingly do right ; and though at the commencement they may often relapse into sin, yet they are to rise again all the oftener and the more valiantly. These instructions should be general, and given at a time when all are behaving well, in order that those who are sufficiently advanced may apply them in time of need.

7. We tell them that all the difficulty of doing right arises from the fact, that when they have a vice to overcome, or a virtue to acquire, they look to themselves and consult temper, inclination, self-love, their own weakness, and the trouble of controlling self ; whereas, instead of weakening their powers by these human considerations, they ought to look to God, because their weakness may be made strength in him ; and they distrust his goodness, when they do not hope to be delivered by the power of his grace ; that they would have a right to be discouraged, if they were told to overcome their own infirmities and sins without his aid, but since God has himself promised to remove the obstacles out of their way, they have only to pray, to hope, and to rejoice in him from whom their help cometh.

8. They must be led to thankfulness for the help we give them in overcoming the weakness of their corrupt nature, by not yielding to it, but by inducing them willingly to endure little mortifications and public reproofs, which, by degrees, make them less sensitive, and less afraid to own their faults in public, and thus accustom them to penitence and humility.

9. We try to impress on their minds, that a mere wish to do right is nothing in the sight of God, unless it be carried

into practice at every opportunity ; and that when we come to die, a life spent in good intentions will be of no avail unless we have striven to execute them, since, far from being rewarded for those intentions, we shall be punished for leaving them undone.

10. We are not to prejudice their minds in favour of a conventional life, nor to let them know what we believe in regard to the small number of persons who obtain salvation while living in the world. It is enough to shew them the difficulty of salvation, their obligations as Christians, and what were the vows made for them in baptism. They must also be exhorted on the things they are to avoid if they re-enter the world. It is likewise well to speak occasionally of our own personal feelings in regard to a worldly life, and not to conceal from them our joy, contentment, and repose.

11. If they of their own accord begin a conversation upon the subject of religion, we can improve the opportunity by speaking of the happiness enjoyed by a good nun who truly lives up to her profession, of the perpetual comfort she finds in meditating upon the means afforded her of loving God, and of becoming eternally happy through obedience and humility, which are the only roads to heaven for all Christians, but more especially for nuns, making them understand that a religious life is not burdensome, but one of the greatest comforts to persons who wish to keep their baptismal vows ; because God does not grant the privilege of entire consecration to himself to all persons, nor even to all who are desirous of it, and therefore we ought humbly to entreat him to bestow on us this excellent gift, and prepare ourselves by holy behaviour to receive it.

12. It is well to tell them occasionally that our love to God makes us love them, and that the severe reproofs we sometimes administer to them are occasioned by a tenderness which makes their faults visible and painful to us, through

its very warmth. At the same time we can assure them, that whatever we do for them is prompted by love, and by a wish to make them well-pleasing to God, that we feel kindly towards them, even while punishing their faults, for it does violence to ourselves to correct them, and we would far rather treat them gently than severely.

III.

How Children should be Talked to in Private.

1. It is easier to guide children aright if we adopt the custom of talking to them alone. In these private interviews, we can soften their troubles, incline their minds to subdue their own faults, and shew them the radical origin of their follies and sins. And I may say there is great reason to hope for good, when God inspires the children with confidence in their governess, for I never yet saw one that had it who did not improve.

2. In these interviews we must be very serious, treating them kindly, but not at all familiarly. If we perceive that a child finds amusement in the conversation, she must be treated with less gentleness than the others. Much disrection is needed in the interview as well as in the time of its taking place. Once a fortnight I should think often enough, except in special cases, for which no rules can be given.

3. We must guard against being deceived, and it is well to let the children know that we understand all their tricks, for then they are more likely to leave them off, and to acquire insensibly that frankness and simplicity of character without which it is vain to hope they will improve.

4. It is also very necessary not to be taken by surprise, and this can only be avoided by the help of God. Therefore we ought not to talk with them until we have prayed to him,

and thought over in his presence what they are likely to say, and what it is his will that we should answer. We must implore with tears and sighs that his divine majesty may illumine our darkness, and that the light of his grace may discover to us what the children seek to hide. And if they say anything to which we are not prepared to give a reply, we can tell them that we will take time to ask wisdom of God, and they, on their parts, may pray that God would incline them to receive all that we say for their good into hearts entirely free from all human bias. We must also use this delay whenever we find them displeased at what we may already have said, or taking some of our warnings amiss. We can then say that we perceive they are not disposed to listen, or that perhaps we may be mistaken, and that if we pray to God in humility, he will doubtless have pity upon us both. This slight condescension is not to be universal, but it is often of great use to the elder girls, and to those who are intelligent. Therefore I repeat again, for it cannot be too often said, that it is better to pray than to exhort ; and I feel that our hearts and minds should be continually lifted up to heaven, and asking God to put words into our mouths that we may speak aright.

5. Continual vigilance is requisite in order to discover what are their tempers and dispositions, and to find out for ourselves that which they may not have courage to confess. It is well to be beforehand with them, when we perceive that they are ashamed to own their misconduct, and to induce them to speak more freely by concealing from them at first many truths that would be too pungent for their imperfect condition.

6. By degrees, if God open their hearts to speak with sincerity, we can talk to them more sternly, and shew them that they are bound to do penance, in case they seem to require it. We must also convince them how narrow is the

path that leads to heaven, and that only the courageous and violent take it by force.

7. If they ask to perform many special acts of devotion, permission must only be granted for very few, or none at all ; and they must be told that such actions only please God when they spring from a heart truly touched by love to him, and by a sincere wish to please him and to repent of sin ; that our opinion of them will not be formed from these actions, but from their faithful observance of our minutest regulations, from the aid they render to their sisters, and the careful correction of their own faults ; that these are the things which make us think they wish to serve God, and not a number of unusual acts of devotion, therefore they must not take it ill that we do not allow the latter, since our aim is to do them good, and not to encourage them in self-deception.

8. We can, however, at times, grant the desired permission, without appearing to take any special notice of what is going forward, though in reality we keep a closer watch than usual over every movement. This method of conduct will soon discover whether or not they are acting hypocritically, for in that case they will stop on finding that they are unobserved, and their piety will gradually diminish. We ought also for the same reason to be very rigid in requiring the fulfilment of the engagements they make, reserving all comment until some future time when they seem better disposed, and then shewing them the sin and peril of seeking to perform extraordinary deeds of devotion in their own carnal strength.

9. If there are any disobedient children whom the Abbess thinks it right to retain, we ought, in their better moments, to beg them to be willing that we should try to correct their faults, shewing them, as gently and kindly as we can, that they are bound to live as Christians. And if they do not

posed, we must make them understand that we will not go on with their conduct, and that, though our censures were trifling, we should not cease to reprove and to punish them, in order to draw out their consciousness, to prevent them from being confirmed in their evil ways, and to abate the effects of their bad behaviour on their companions. It is well to show them that we are bound to continue to act thus.

IV.

Of General and Special Penances that may be imposed.

1. They must be made to ask forgiveness of any of the men, or their companions, to whom they may have spoken impudently, or given cause of dissatisfaction, or set a bad example.

2. This pardon may be asked in various ways, according to the degree of offence, either in private or in public, in the refectory or the school-room. They may also be directed to kiss the foot of the injured party. We must take special care, if only two or three or four persons witnessed the offence, to have the reparation made privately, unless the fault was very trivial, because it is dangerous to inflict punishment in the presence of those ignorant of its necessity. I say the same of certain grave faults, even when committed by a number. It is better to wait and administer a separate reproof to each or to all of the guilty ones together, than to harm the weak.

3. We can make them wear a gray cloak, or go to dinner without veil or scapulary, or stand without them at the church-door.

4. We may forbid their attending church for one day, or even several days, according to the offence, or make them stand at the door or in a separate place from the others,

taking care, however, that the privation is not a matter of indifference.

5. The little and half-grown girls may be made to wear a placard with the name of their offence written in large characters, a word or two being sufficient, as *idle*, *careless*, *untruthful*, &c. Or they may be made to wear a red tongue.

6. Making them ask the prayers of their sisters in the refectory, and mention the sin they have committed, or the duty in which they have failed.

7. The elder ones must be restrained, if possible, by the love of God and the fear of his judgments, and occasionally we can impose on them the same punishments as on the younger, such as going without a veil, or asking the prayers of the sisterhood in the dining-room ; but we must judge whether a penance of the kind would be likely to do good or only to irritate. We are therefore bound to pray much that He would enlighten and guide us in all things, for his own glory and the salvation of those he has committed to our care.

V.

Of Confession.

1. We often tell the children, both in public and private, how extremely important it is for them to make their confessions truthfully and without disguise, because children are so apt to conceal their faults or to cloak them, and thereby we are hindered from ascertaining the real state of their minds.

2. They must therefore be exhorted to ask of God a lowly and contrite heart, in order that they may acknowledge their offences meekly, and rejoice in being humbled and punished as they deserve.

3. Telling them frequently that it is their duty to confess

their most shameful transgressions, with every aggravation, in spite of their own repugnance. It is well often to describe to them the horrible condition of a dying soul, when it finds itself for ever banished from God, and left to everlasting contempt, because it chose to avoid a momentary and slight mortification in this world ; that the whole world will then witness the confusion of unpardoned sinners ; while the shame experienced in the confessional is confined to the knowledge of one person, is kept secret, and lasts but a little while.

4. When they appear to have gained a great degree of strength and courage, we can advise them to spare no pains in order to recover the friendship of God, if they have lost it ; and thus gently lead them to perform both inward and outward penance, more especially the former. They can be told with advantage, that an improvement in behaviour gives the best evidence of a good confession, that it is a great sin to be always confessing and falling anew into the same snares, for it shews that they do not confess in a right spirit, nor truly regret that they have offended God.

5. When we find any of the children doing wrong continually if they have the chance, we ought to tell them that in God's sight they are more guilty than they suppose, for he imputes to them all the evil designs they form in heart or communicate to their companions, though they may not be able to execute them. They must be told that it is their duty to confess all these things, and to make bare the windings of their hearts, so that nothing may be kept back from him who fills the place of Jesus Christ ; that men may easily be deceived, but they cannot deceive God ; and that the blood of Jesus Christ only cleanses those who sincerely and faithfully confess their sins. They thus are made to comprehend that it is only themselves whom they are deceiving.

6. It is good for them not to be too familiar with the distinctions between venial and mortal sins, lest they should

lose their horror of sin, and yield more readily to temptation. They should be told that nothing is unimportant to those who love God, but that all sin is an evil, and we are to avoid everything, without exception, that we think might displease him who did not spare the blood of his Son to wash away our trespasses.

7. The younger ones had better not be sent early or often to confession. We may wait till they are old enough to wish to correct their little faults, because it is bad for them to confess unless they amend, and at any rate they ought not to go until they have perseveringly tried to improve.

8. When very young, we can by degrees accustom them to own their faults, teach them how to accuse themselves without telling tales of their sisters, and help them to recollect the chief faults they have forgotten, that they may thus learn to confess aright.

9. We must observe whether confession has been of service to the children, before allowing them to go thither again ; and if they have been very naughty, we must advise them to do penance beforehand, that is, if they confide in us, proposing a reparation suited to the degree and nature of the offence. As, for instance, if they have been unkind to a companion, let them do her service, and fulfil every charitable office towards her more earnestly and kindly, let them ask pardon of the offended party, and of all who were present when the offence was given, and repeat prayers for her benefit. We must not suffer them to go again to the confessional until their hearts be truly contrite and full of sorrow for having displeased God. In this way we can guard against a mere confession by rote, which is to be dreaded for all persons, but especially for children.

10. We teach them, that it is not enough to own five or six faults, and no more ; but that they must acknowledge their temper and behaviour ever since the last confession,

because a confession of separate offences does not shew the state of the heart. Therefore, if pride is their besetting sin, they ought to say whether they have yielded to it more or less since the last confession, and how often, particularising the day and hour, &c.

11. It is best that they should feel no delicacy about naming the person with whom they may have done wrong, because they all have the same confessor, and he needs thoroughly to know each child's behaviour and disposition, in order to judge of the degree of its guilt. Without this knowledge he cannot serve them aright.

12. We are here presupposing that which is indispensable, namely, that the mistress should make the confessor completely acquainted with all that concerns the children before they attended confession, so that he may judge of the sincerity of their self-accusations. The confessor and the mistress ought, if these measures are to succeed, to be thoroughly agreed—the mistress not allowing anything of importance, such as the holy communion, prayers, or penances, to take place without consulting the confessor ; and the confessor, in his turn, informing her of what is requisite for the children's good, so that she may neither do nor say aught that he would disapprove. The children ought never to perceive any difference in the directions given them by the confessor and mistress.

13. If one of the children objects to the confessor selected for her, she must not speak of this to her companions, but she may represent her repugnance to her governess, who will set matters right by permission of the Abbess, provided the objection be reasonable, and not a mere caprice.

14. We do not here speak of the tempers requisite for confession, nor for the holy communion and other exercises, because our present design is only to notice some things of special importance in the government of children.

VI.

Of the Holy Communion.

1. We ought often to pray that God would inspire the children with a dread of partaking the communion unworthily and uselessly, imploring him to bestow on them his fear, without which all our exhortations must be vain. We try also to impress upon them the feeling, that one communion alone ought to work some new change in them, perceptible to others; because those who feed on the body of the Son of God should be known by their words and actions, as differing from others, and ought to set a watch over the tongue that has had the privilege of tasting the bread of heaven. We must also teach them, that after so great a favour, they ought to lead a new life, very different from their former life, and that this solid nourishment ought to make them resolute in self-denial and in the practice of every virtue.

2. The period of communion is to be regulated by their conduct. Those who are in bondage to some favourite sin, and do not like to be reproved for it, must rarely receive permission to commune. We must take care that they do not receive the sacrament carelessly, or merely because others do it. Some even may wish to receive it from pride, or the desire of being praised or considered as great girls. Children are capable of all these defects and of many others besides, unless we are very careful. It is well to startle them by our strong terms of expressing the peril of taking the communion without we really love and fear God, because it is a matter of life or death, and cannot be too much reverenced. These things should be spoken of generally, and special application can be afterwards made to those who need it.

3. If there should be any among them too timid or scrupulous, which is seldom the case with children, she must be comforted and strengthened in private as she most needs.

4. If one girl should appear very pious and careful in correcting her faults, it will not do to let her commune more frequently than those who behave better in the school-room, but make no special pretensions to piety ; for this apparent goodness may be only pretence, and it is therefore better not to notice it, but to treat all alike. They must never be allowed to praise one another for any reason, and particularly not for communing often. It is well not to praise them in presence of others, even in the hope of doing them good, or exciting a holy emulation, except in the case of children two or three years old ; for if they find out that we notice their piety, some will be likely to behave well for the sake of being praised and esteemed, and will wish to receive the communion more frequently for the same reason.

5. We must beware of those children who only amend their conduct on the approach of sacramental seasons, and afterwards return to their old follies and misdeeds. These must be made to feel that such occasional reformations are not enough, and that we shall not allow them to go to communion until they have behaved properly for a very long time, and striven to regulate their actions by God's law.

6. We must also observe the spirit in which they perform penance, for there are some children very ready to repair their faults, who object to nothing of the kind, yet it all arises from pride and fear of punishment, and if we watch them closely and continually, we find them insincere. We must rarely permit such children to go to communion, for they do not deserve so great a favour.

7. When it is thought proper to debar them from it, we must be careful not to make the privation a matter of indifference, but, on the contrary, to remind them that they have sustained a great loss, and to shew them that they ought to give God no rest until he restore to them his lost favour,

and grant them the necessary qualifications for partaking of the holy sacrament.

8. Very young, giddy, or thoughtless children ought not to be communicants, nor those who are liable to any grave fault. We must wait until God has in some degree wrought a change in them, and allow a considerable space of time, say a year or six months at the least, to see if their actions are consistent. I have never regretted keeping children back, for by so doing the well-disposed advance in virtue, and others shew their true character. The first communion cannot be too carefully prepared for, because on it often depend the rest.

9. After the communion, we must exhort them not to forget the God who has thus given himself to them, but to render him continual thanks, and to be much in prayer; watching over themselves, lest they do anything unworthy of his holy presence, and being assured that God will dwell in their hearts so long as they give him no cause of displeasure, because he never withdraws from us until we have first withdrawn from him by our sins. It is well to watch them on communion days, and to notice whether they feel the presence of God, and lift up their souls to him, and also if their behaviour is more subdued.

VII.

Of Prayer.

1. As prayer has been mentioned in the foregoing rules, I need here only speak of it in general. We try to inspire the children with a wish of turning to God in every need, and especially in seasons of weakness or temptation. They are taught that a single glance lifted to him in faith, humility, and constancy, will do more to sustain them than

all the strong resolutions which they could form in their own strength, and which are useless, unless God writes them on the heart by the power of his grace ; for we can only effect our own perdition, while God is able to save us.

2. We do not overload their memories with a great number of mental or vocal prayers, but seek to implant within the heart a sincere desire of God's presence, and a habit of looking to him in all places and in every occupation, and of praising and adoring him, as every created and even inanimate thing does in its degree.

3. We explain to them that all their errors arise from not having prayed to God aright, which they cannot do while their hearts cling to self, to their own pleasures, or to any creature, no matter how lovely or holy.

4. We must be careful that morning and evening prayers be properly offered up, and if the children perform those duties negligently and lukewarmly, they ought not to go to mass for several days. They must be told that we cannot give them pious emotions, but that we can and will force them to behave rightly and reverently in God's presence. They must understand that there are punishments for the frivolous and giddy, and these must be inflicted, such as standing apart from the rest, and only having permission to repeat one *Ave* or one *Pater*, with the assurance that they shall not say any more prayers until they are more devout.

5. Those to whom permission is given for half-hourly prayer, as remarked in the first part of these rules, ought to be noticed as delighting in prayer, and to be well instructed how to pray. If the indulgence does not make them more humble, charitable, and silent, it must be taken away ; and even when they seem to derive benefit from it, we should occasionally keep them back, in order to see how they feel under the privation, and if they are equally willing to pray or to let it alone.

6. We recommend the children to take the Virgin Mary as their mother and mediatrix,* in their various troubles and wants. They are taught that she dwelt in the temple from early childhood, just as they live in houses dedicated to God, in order that they may become good Christians ; that their present dwelling is dedicated to the Virgin, and called *Notre Dame de Port Royal* ; that she must be their model of prayer, meekness, silence, modesty, industry, and, in short, in every action. They are exhorted to keep her solemn festivals, which are greatly honoured in the Cistercian order, to repeat her *chaplet* often, and her litanies every day.

7. We also recommend devotion to the holy angels, especially to their guardian angel, whom, we tell them, God bestows on them as a shield from the snares of Satan, the world, and the flesh ; who watches over them continually, knows their spiritual, and even bodily wants, and joyfully bears the fragrance of their good deeds heavenwards ; while, on the contrary, if the happy angels could be sad, they would grieve when those whom they are serving do wrong, or fall into conduct which is improper and unworthy of a Christian.

8. We tell them, moreover, that the saints are appointed

* It may seem almost superfluous to repeat an observation already made, on the strange mixture of truth and error which could lead a mind, penetrated as Jacqueline Pascal's was with the conviction that they who worship God must do it in spirit and in truth, to seek for herself, or teach others to seek, the mediation of any created being between the soul of a sincere penitent and his God. With regard to the Rosary, it is not improbable that, were the fact of its origin generally known, the very name would be as hateful as that of the Inquisition, since both originated from the same quarter. The Chaplet or Rosary was invented by St Dominick, during his stay in Languedoc. A chaplet of beads has been used as a memento of prayers to be recited, by the early Egyptian anchorites, and also by the Benedictines ; but Dominick invented a new arrangement of the chaplet, and dedicated it to the honour and glory of the Virgin. A complete Rosary has fifteen large and a hundred and fifty small beads ; the former being the number of Pater-nosters, the latter that of Ave Marias. Any one who knows the fact of its authorship can hardly avoid associating the Rosary with the remembrance of the fearful cruelties practised upon the unhappy victims of the Albigensian crusade.—Tr.

of God to intercede for us with himself, and teach them to turn to these saints, beseeching them to obtain from the divine goodness the graces they need. Each day they implore the protection of St Joseph, St Bernard, St Augustine, and St Benedict, the patrons of the house, the saints whose name they bear, those who are the patrons of the year and month, and those whose festival it is.

VIII.

Of Reading.

1. The books we use for the children's instruction are, the Tradition of the Church ; the Letters of M. de St Cyran ; the Imitation of Jesus Christ, by Thomas à Kempis ; St Louis of Grenada ; Philothea, or Introduction to a Devout Life, by St Francis de Sales ; St John Climacus ; Familiar Theology ; Christian Principles, in the Prayer-book ; the Letters of a Carthusian Monk, lately translated ; the Meditations of St Theresa ; the Lord's Prayer, and other books intended for the improvement of true believers.

2. I have indicated what is to be read in the morning at eight o'clock, in the daily rules.

3. In the reading after Vespers, other books can be used ; the Letters of St Jerome ; Christian Almsgiving ; certain passages of the Way to Perfection, by St Theresa, and also of the Lives of the Fathers of the Egyptian Desert, and of other holy biographies.

4. We ourselves read aloud in general, except after Vespers, and are always present to explain and enforce what is read. We should try to accustom them not to listen merely as a means of gaining amusement, but with a desire of self-application, and our efforts at explanation should be directed more towards the making them good Christians and correcting their faults, than to the rendering them learned. They must be

urged to pray that God would enable them to profit by what they hear, and also aid us in giving them suitable and useful expositions.

5. When we do not ourselves read, we mark what is to be read, and they are not allowed to alter either the place or the book ; for we meet with but few volumes in which it is not necessary to pass over something.

6. During the evening reading, they are allowed and even requested to ask questions on every point which they do not understand, with respect and humility, and in our answers we try to teach them how to apply what is read for their own benefit. If we see that no questions are asked upon subjects which they are not likely to comprehend, we can inquire whether they understand what is read, and if they have nothing to say, we must reprove them for remaining in ignorance, when it is their duty to obtain instruction.

7. When the reading is over, the book must be taken away, for the only books they are allowed to keep are the Prayer-book, Familiar Theology, the Words of our Saviour, the Imitation of Jesus Christ, and a Psalter in Latin and French. The governess takes charge of all other books, and they are very willing it should be so ; for they acknowledge it does them more good, and that the holiest books profit them not when read from curiosity, which is usually the case if they keep them in their own care.

8. They are never suffered to open a book which does not belong to them, nor to borrow books from one another, without permission of their governess, which is rarely given, on account of the confusion often occasioned by loans of the kind.

IX.

Of Illness and Bodily Wants.

1. Those children who are ill must be tended very carefully, having their wants supplied very comfortably, and at

the precise time, calling in the aid of a physician, if necessary, and punctually obeying all his directions for obtaining relief.

2. We try, if possible, to be present during the physician's visit, and it is well to see him beforehand, for the purpose of describing the illness, and the patient's behaviour in regard to taking medicine or nourishment, and of requesting him to say but little in the sick-room, for fear of causing alarm or sorrow in the child's mind. After the physician has seen his patient, we must inquire what he thinks ought to be done.

3. We accustom them to make no fuss about swallowing even very distasteful remedies. We administer these in person, and comfort them with words of Scripture, leading them to offer up their sufferings as a sacrifice to God.

4. We exhort them to find no fault with the doctor's prescriptions, because during their illness he stands in the place of God to them. They therefore ought to obey him as they would obey God, yielding up life, health, and illness to the disposal of Divine Providence, which ordains that the remedies employed shall be efficacious or not, according as our best interests require. Consequently, let the event be never so painful, we are not to blame the physician or his remedies, but to bow in silence and humility before the allotments of divine goodness; and, in order that the sick may be better able to do this, we must endeavour to procure the assistance of persons who are at once good physicians and good Christians.

5. There must be a room set apart for invalids, into which the other children cannot go, unless by necessity or the mistress's permission. During play-time, one of the more discreet girls may be allowed to amuse the sick one, but the sister who is acting as nurse must not leave the room, unless in case one of the elder girls intending to take the

veil, and in whom we feel entire confidence, is present, who knows how to help and even to nurse children that are not dangerously ill.

6. Whenever there are many ill, and the services of another sister are required, she ought to be chosen for her discretion and her kindness. Discretion is needful to watch their behaviour, and to see that they do not lose in sickness the good habits so painfully acquired in health ; and also to prevent the indulgence of their fancies, or their repugnance to swallow the proper medicine, or their longing for things that would be injurious. And kindness is needed in order to soften the refusal of what might hurt them, by gentle words and an affectionate manner.

7. We pay great attention to those who are ill, even more than we do the healthy, both in order to provide for their wants and to keep them in good order, and teach them to bear suffering in a Christian spirit, for then they are not so likely to become disobedient.

8. Besides this general oversight and attendance, each sick one is visited in private, and treated as kindly and cordially as possible ; we either listen to what they may wish to say, or entreat them to be good, and to bear pain patiently, offering it to God in remembrance of and gratitude for the sufferings of our Lord and Saviour. And though we are to be very gentle and patient with them, we must not encourage a delicacy that might make them hard to please, or cross ; but, on the contrary, teach the sufferer to submit to every inconvenience from a holy motive.

9. If the illness should be dangerous, we must consult the Mother Abbess and the physicians about the administration of the sacraments, according to the age and capacity of the children, redoubling at the same time our cares and attentions, so that, having no bodily wants unsupplied, they may be free to think of holy things as much as illness, strength,

and age permit ; though we are not to weary them, but, on the contrary, to take especial pains that our visits may not overtax their energies. At times, we can endeavour to amuse them by our visits ; and at others, if they seem inclined to speak of God, we can introduce pious discourse.

10. As soon as the children are recovered, they must resume their usual duties, lest they become ungovernable, which is to be feared, for very young persons like nothing better than liberty. But after their return to the work-room, we must be careful to give them the food and rest necessary for the perfect restoration of their health.

11. In slight cases of indisposition, they are to have what is requisite, but are not to be greatly petted, because there are some children who make a pretence of being sick. I have had such children to deal with, though it is very long, thank God, since anything of the sort has occurred among our own pupils. It is best, in these cases, not to appear as though we knew they were deceiving, but to pity them, and say that they are ill, and must go to bed at once ; to put them in a separate room with one sister as nurse, who refuses to speak to them, saying that talking will only make them worse, and that they need rest ; and to keep them for a day or two on broth and eggs. If really ill, the regimen will be of service, and if not, they will say that they are better on the morrow ; and in this way they will be cured of hypocrisy, without our having given them any ground of complaint, which might occur if we were to say that they were not actually ill, and they might even be tempted to tell falsehoods, and feign more suffering than before.

No. II.

Recollections of the Mère Marie Angélique.

BY SISTER JAQUELINE DE SAINTE EUPHEMIE PASCAL.

AMONG the writings of Jacqueline Pascal are some reminiscences of the Abbess Angélique. They have no date, but were probably written down soon after Angélique left Port Royal des Champs. A few of these will close the Appendix, and finish the present volume. Jacqueline Pascal's *Thoughts on the Death of Jesus Christ*, having been written for the especial benefit of a nun in her cell, will be omitted altogether, as not being likely to interest the general Protestant reader.

I WAS once speaking to our Mother Angélique of a person whose father had kept a gambling-table, when she said, in her usual emphatic manner, that wealth so obtained was more unrighteously acquired, and ought to be more scrupulously restored to the former owners, than if its possessor had been a robber on the highway ; for this reason : robbers only injure the passengers whom they attack, while gamesters are the authors of all the innumerable sins of their victims, such as blasphemy, knaveries, the ruin of families, with all its ensuing disasters, quarrels, murders, and, in fact, an infinity of crime. For of all these evils they are the primary cause ; and if the person in question does not feel ashamed of his parentage, he is just as guilty as his father, and ought to be looked upon with the same abhorrence. True, children are not to bear the iniquity of their fathers ; that is, provided they hate and forsake it ; but if for these sins they do not humble themselves before God, condemning such practices

from the heart, and being thoroughly ashamed of them, then the guilt of their fathers becomes their own.

The judgments of God are fearful things, but, because men do not think of them or dread them sufficiently, they do not strive to avoid them. You see, my daughter, there is no way of escape except in humbling ourselves deeply before God, on all accounts, and more especially because of the sins committed in our respective families ; but, instead of this, what vain-glory we everywhere behold ! We ought often to think upon those things that lower us in our own estimation, whether in nature, in fortune, or in grace ; but, instead of this, if any little circumstance is calculated to increase our importance, we are very adroit in seizing the right moment to make it known ; or, on the other hand, if, as is often the case, there be something disgraceful to hide, we are equally ready to pass it over. Now, does not all this really spring from our excessive pride ? Not that there is any need of disparaging one's family—no one is called upon to do this ; but neither are we to publish what is creditable, while we conceal what is the reverse. The best way is to be quite silent, but we are not to keep silence merely because we are ashamed of the truth, but because we dare not speak out of vanity. It seems a great effort to say nothing on the subject, but this is really no more than our simple duty.

At another time, when we were talking of some one whom errors in religion had so infatuated that it was very difficult to undeceive her, the Mère Angélique said to me, " It is not only difficult, but actually impossible to effect this, unless God himself should enlighten her mind, and he will do this in his own time and way. We are not to leave any means untried, since we do not know whether or not our efforts may be the appointed instrumentality for bringing his will to pass ; but we are not hastily to assume the task of obliging others to understand truths for which their souls are not yet

ripe. This would be like seeking to make the sun rise at midnight. All the princes and most puissant kings of earth would be powerless, if they were to strive with united forces to compel the sun to rise an hour earlier than his wont ; neither can any human beings, however endowed with eloquence or persuasive power, cause one of their fellows to apprehend the truths not yet revealed to him by God's illuminating Spirit."

Some one having once said in her presence that she should refuse to take any part in some business that had arisen, in which a person greatly afflicted, and at the same time suspected of glaring faults, implored her to help her out ; our Mother commented upon this speech, declaring that she scarcely knew an individual, except, perhaps, M. Singlin, who would not act in the same way, and avoid, if it were possible, assuming the care of business that involved risk of any kind. It was answered, that she ought also to make herself an exception, since she had never been known to refuse a call upon her attention and aid. "No," said she ; "as for me, I am only a miserable sinner, and never did one good deed. But on such occasions I always recollect that, supposing any one whom we dearly love—for instance, my sister Catherine de St Jean—were to be lost, so that we could not tell if she were dead or alive, nor where to find her, and there should come to our door a wretched stranger, asking for us ; how quickly we should run to see if, by any possibility, it might be our poor sister, and with what eager tenderness we should aid her ! It makes one weep even to fancy such a scene. Well, then, if the person in distress be one of God's people, unjustly persecuted, ought we not to feel as much sympathy as if he or she belonged to our own family ? How do we know that it is not one of our sisters, sent to us by the Lord Jesus ?—I mean one of his flock, for whom he requires us to feel kindly, and to assist as far as we can. Therefore we should never refuse

...to an application, and acquaint ourselves with
what a foolish we are to act foolishly, or to relieve
such a foolish creature; for if our sister were really
an angel we should be easy to mistake the first comer for her;
but we do... I hasten to see if we could recognise her. We
do, therefore, carefully and affectionately to examine what
the generous naking relief are sent to us of God, but not to
grasp immediately in such a work."

It was then explained to her that the person who had declined to take any share in the business above mentioned did not do so out of unkindness, but because she did not wish to incur the responsibility, and did not believe her assistance to be really indispensable, because she would not willingly mix up with the affair, nor encumber herself with anxious care. Our Mother approved of this, saying that the motive was a good one, provided she held herself ready to come forward if her presence should really be required.

One of the nuns having opened on a verse in the *Scripture* which greatly alarmed her, our mother said: "The *Scripture* thunders us to do as it is written that we may have a safe harbor to us. From the most learned, who say it is enough the execution of his promises as it is written, I say to those persons who called him to come to us, that we remain here as long as we can see. The *Scripture* was not written for us, but for all of us, and we are not to be separated from it. We are to be following the *Scripture* in all our acts, and to do as the *Scripture* bids us, and we are to do nothing but what the *Scripture* bids us."

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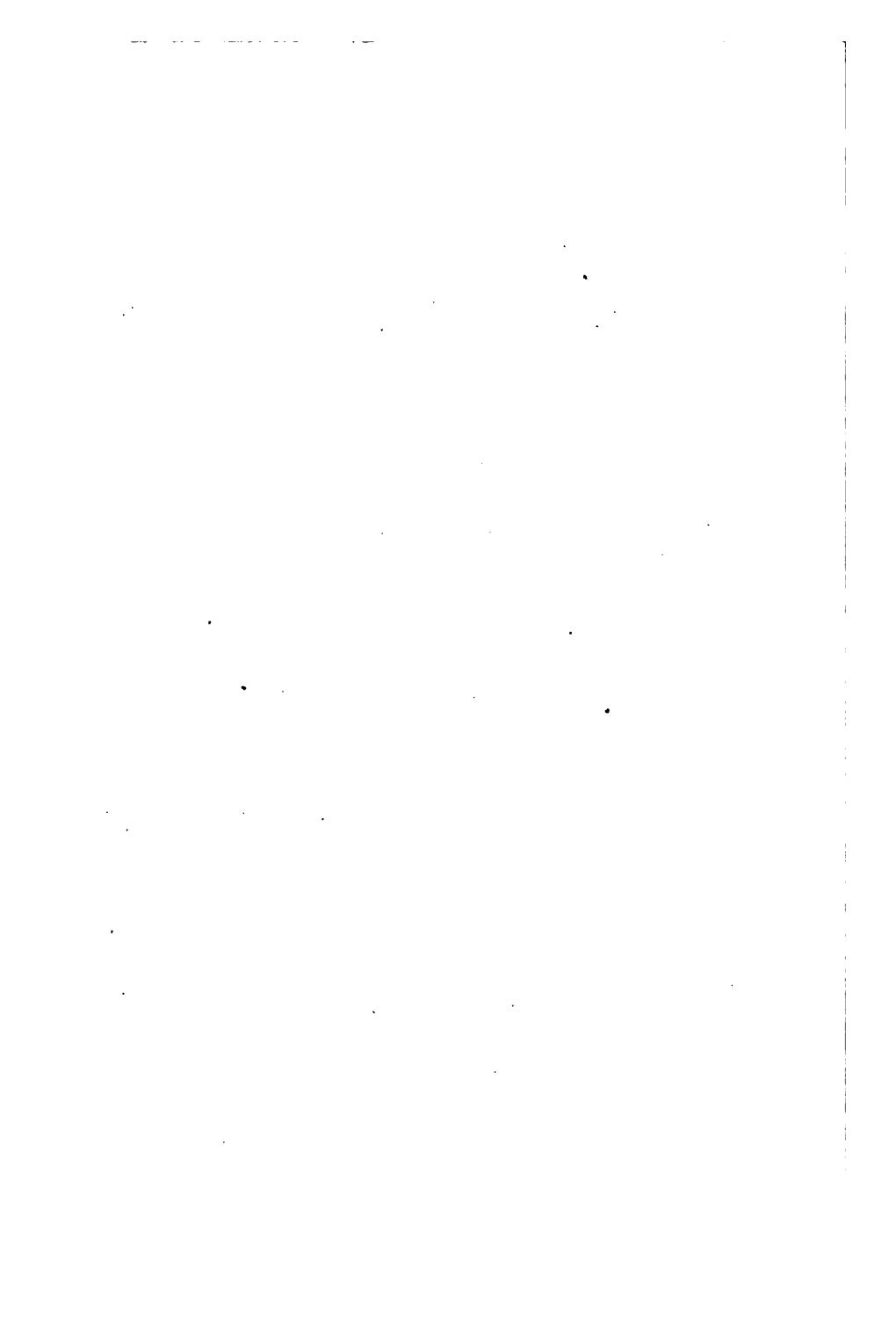
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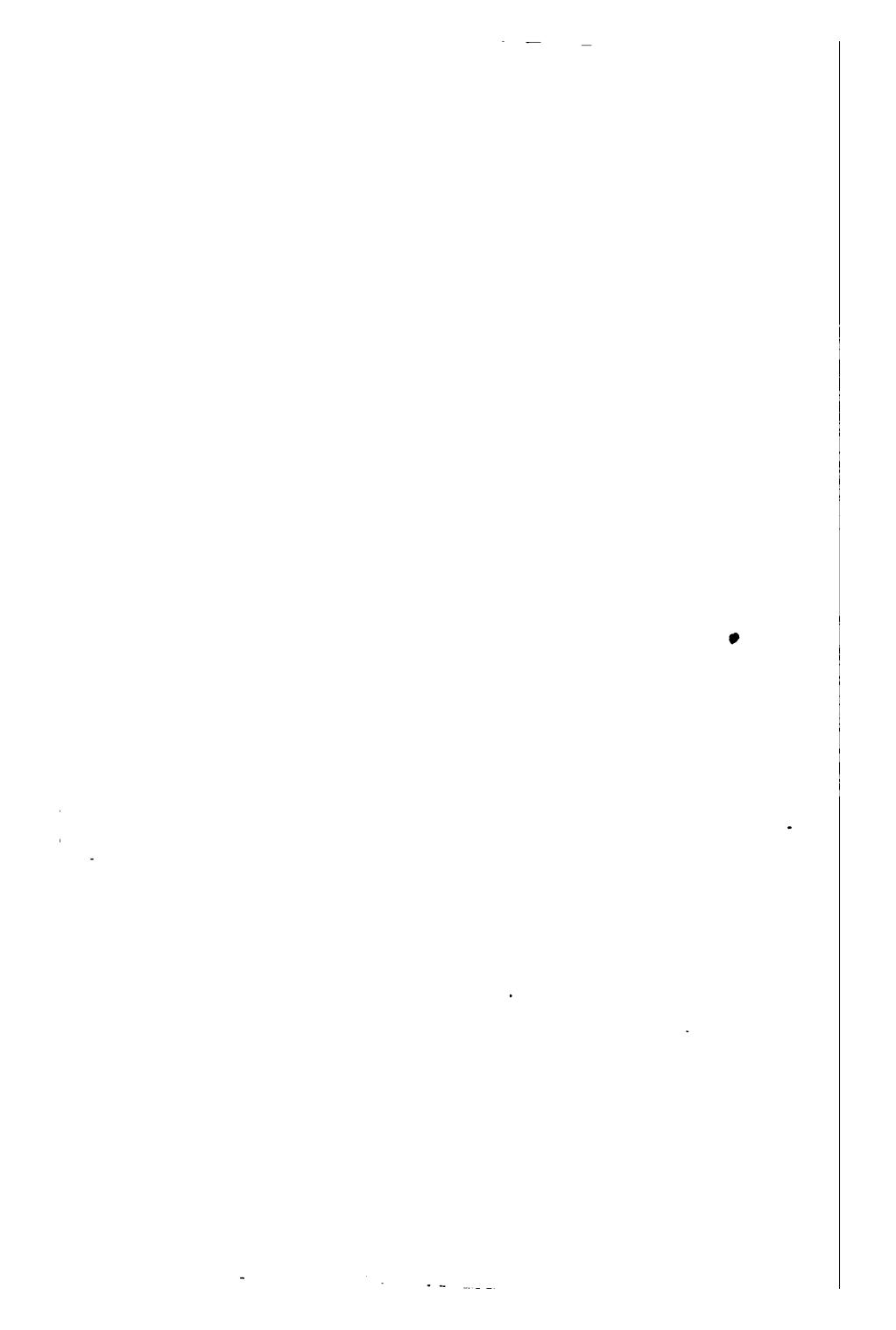
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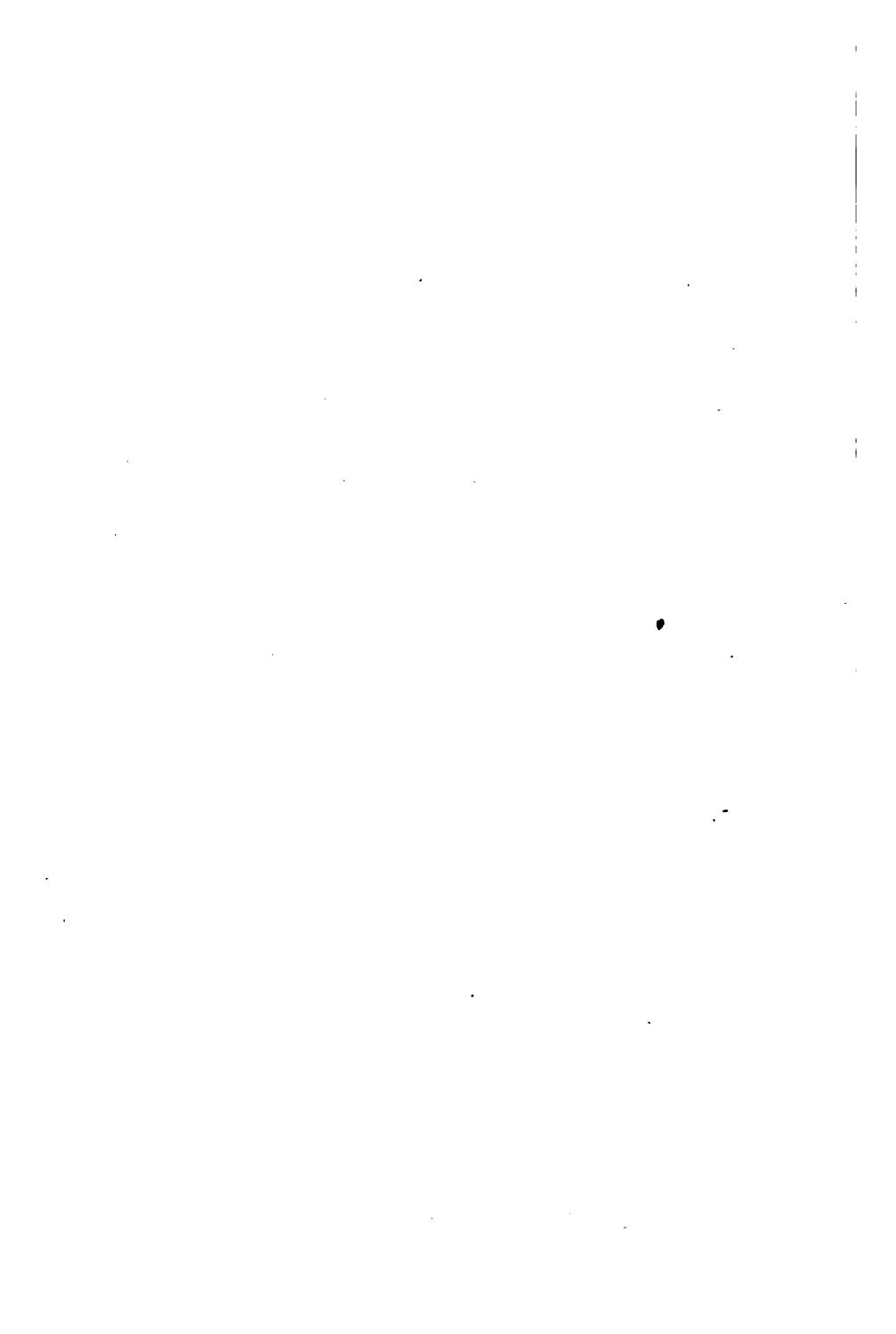
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